Dance in the Vampire Bund

NOZOMU TAMAKI

VOLUME 13

Tamaki Nozomu Presents Dance In The Vampire Bund 13

DANCE IN THE VAMPIRE BUND
13

NOZOMU TAMAKI

Wer die Schönheit angeschaut mit Augen,

Ist dem Tode schon anheimgegeben,

Wird für keinen Dienst auf Erden taugen,

Und doch wird er vor dem Tode beben,

Wer die Schönheit angeschaut mit Augen!

Whoever has gazed at beauty eye to eye

Is given over, signed and sealed, to Death,

Is useless here while drawing earthly breath

Though he may tremble while he fears to die,

Whoever has gazed at beauty eye to eye!

August von Platen, Tristan



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READING DIRECTIONS

This book reads from *right to left*, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get the hang of it! Have fun!!



THERE IS NO TELLING WHEN IT MAY AGAIN COLLA--

AS EVERY-THING MUST BE DONE BY HAND, IT IS VERY SLOW GOING. ALSO, THE ORIGINAL EXPLOSION HAS RENDERED THE TUNNEL UNSTABLE.

HOW PROGRESSES THE WORK?

POORLY, MY LORD.

RMBL

RMBL

RMBL

RUMBLE

SHR

SHR

MY LORD, I HAVE FOUND SOME-THING!

HMPH!

WHAT OF THE DETACHMENT SENT TO THE ENTRANCE OF THE ABYSS?

THEY ARE BEGINNING THEIR DESCENT AT THIS VERY MOMENT, MY LORD.

HOWEVER, AS IT IS A VERY NARROW CAVERN, SENDING IN THE ENTIRE FORCE WILL REQUIRE MUCH TIME.

FWAP

LOOK HERE.

THE UPPER REACHES OF THE CAVE SYSTEM COME VERY CLOSE TO THE LOWEST LEVEL OF THE WEST WING'S STORAGE BASEMENT.

IT IS, IN FACT, CONNECTED WITH THE **UNDERGROUND RIVER** INTO WHICH WE HAVE ALREADY DRILLED TO SUPPLY THE CASTLE WITH WATER.

HOW-EVER ...

THIS CASTLE IS CONSTRUCTED UPON *KARST**, WHICH IS NOT THE STURDIEST OF FOUNDA-TIONS. THERE HAVE ALREADY BEEN MANY EXPLOSIONS TODAY.

CONDUCT MORE TO WIDEN THE WELL, AND IT IS VERY LIKELY THE **ENTIRE CASTLE** WILL COLLAPSE!

IF THAT WELL WERE TO BE *EX-PANDED*, BLASTING THROUGH TO THE CAVES UNDER-NEATH...

A DIRECT ROUTE COULD BE ESTAB-LISHED, MY LORD, ALLOWING FOR THE RAPID DEPLOY-MENT OF ALL OUR FORCES.

!

*Karst is limestone terrain, characterized by underground streams, sinks, and ravines due to water erosion.

I HAVE NO OTHER ALTER-NATIVE. **DO IT!**

.....

AND IF SHE ALREADY HAS, SHE CANNOT BE **ALLOWED** TO LEAVE **ALIVE!**

I **MUST** PREVENT MINA FROM DISCOV-ERING WHAT'S DOWN THERE!

Chapter 71: Call for Awakening

ALLOW ME TO INTRO-DUCE YOU.

THIS, YOUR MAJESTY, IS THE **DAUGHTER** OF THE FATHER OF ALL VAMPIRES.

SHE IS THE *ORIGINAL* QUEEN OF THE VAMPIRES.

IS IT... *ME?*

NO... NO, BUT SHE LOOKS THE VERY **IMAGE** OF MY MOTHER!

BY THE NINE HELLS ...

WHO *IS* THAT ?!

OF COURSE SHE DOES. SHE'S YOUR GREAT GRAND-MOTHER, MANY TIMES OVER.

MY ANCES-TOR...?

UNBE-LIEV-ABLE!

RSTL

KRAK

THAT WAS WHEN I BEGAN MY FRANTIC SEARCH.

HE WAS **DESPERATE** TO REVIVE THE TRUE ROYAL LINE... THE LINE HE BELIEVED *BROKEN* WITH YOUR BIRTH.

THE ONLY SOLUTION HE COULD FIND WAS HIDDEN IN MYTH.

THERE HAD TO BE A WAY TO PRESERVE THE SANCTITY OF THE ROYAL LINE. THE **PURITY** OF THE TRUE BLOOD HAD TO BE RETAINED, NO MATTER **WHAT** THE COST!

!

ROZEN-MANN WAS THE FIRST TO FIND THIS PLACE.

HE SPENT *CENTURIES*, SEARCHING THROUGH EVERY SCRAP OF LORE FROM EVERY CULTURE IN THE WORLD, SEEKING THE CITY.

IN THE END, HE FOUND IT WAS ALL TRUE.

THE NECROP-OLIS. HER.

THEY ALL *EXISTED*.

IT WAS YOUR--NO, *TELOMERE'S* OBJECTIVE FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, WASN'T IT?

THIS CITY...

THAT IS QUITE A LOT OF DETAILED INFOR-MATION YOU HAVE.

.....

SO HE BUILT A CASTLE DIRECTLY ABOVE THIS CITY, AND DEVOTED EVERYTHING HE HAD TO RESEARCH.

!

PSH-T

HEY !!

IT WAS A LUCKY BREAK FOR ME WHEN YOU SHOWED UP.

MAY-BE.

I WENT THROUGH A LOT OF TROUBLE TO GET IN HERE, YOU KNOW. IT WAS **VERY FRUSTRATING** WHEN I FOUND OUT I COULDN'T GET PAST THE LAST DOOR.

AND THE RESULT OF ALL THAT PAINSTAKING WORK? WELL...

AND I ***FOUND*** *A WAY.*

.....

I FOUND A ***KEY.*** *AND I USED IT... UNKNOW-ING OF THE* ***HELL*** *THAT IT WOULD UNLEASH.*

BESIDES, IT'S NOT LIKE SHE CAN *FEEL* ANYTHING.

RELAX. I ONLY TOOK A SMALL BLOOD SAMPLE.

WHO KNOWS?

ALL THE LEGENDS SAY IS THAT SOMETIME IN THE ANCIENT PAST, HER FATHER JUST UP AND **DISAPPEARED** ONE DAY.

WHY? WHO DID THIS TO HER?

SHE LIVES, YES. BUT SHE SLEEPS DEEPLY...

AND THAT'S THE WHOLE OF IT.

SHE'S BEEN THIS WAY FOR THOUSANDS-- NO, *TENS* OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS.

THE ONLY ONE WHO REMAINED BEHIND WAS *HER*... AND THAT'S ALL THAT ANYBODY KNOWS.

THE VAMPIRE NATION THAT HAD FLOURISHED UNDER HIS RULE QUICKLY DISINTEGRATED.

THE HUNDRED CLANS ABANDONED THE NECROPOLIS, CLIMBING UP TO THE SURFACE AND SPREADING OUT ACROSS THE ENTIRE WORLD.

!

THAT'S ONLY IF HE STILL LIVES, HIDING OUT SOME-WHERE IN THE WIDE WORLD.

OF COURSE ...

I DUNNO.

BUT WHY ?!

THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD TELL YOU THAT WOULD BE THE **FATHER** HIMSELF.

!

KRUNCH

THEY MUST BE THE CITY'S GUARD-IANS.

THOSE WERE BUT *STATUES* A MOMENT AGO!

GRUH

FSHUU

AN ENTIRE RACE THAT'S GROWN AND **THRIVED** IN THE UTTER **DARKNESS** OF THESE CAVES...

A RACE OF *PRIMEVAL VAMPIRES!*

OOOM

THEY MUST HAVE WOKEN WHEN YOU SHED YOUR BLOOD AT THE DOOR.

LOOK!

LOOK FAMILIAR? THEY'RE THE *FEMALES* OF THE CREATURES THAT CHASED YOU ABOVE-GROUND!

THEIR EYES HAVE COMPLETELY DEGENERATED...

WSH

FHOOOOMM

FFASH

FSHOOOOOMM

AKI-RA'S.

!

PRINCESS, HAVE YOU **DRUNK** ANYTHING IN THE LAST 24 HOURS?

.....

YES, I HAVE HAD BLOOD...

SOME-THING ISN'T RIGHT.

THE GUARDIANS OF THIS CITY ARE ONLY SUPPOSED TO AWAKEN WHEN INTRUDERS NOT OF THE TRUE BLOOD COME AND TRY TO **ROB** THE PLACE.

FWOO

I WAS TERRIBLY WEAKENED, AND AKIRA *SACRIFICED* HIMSELF TO GIVE ME BLOOD.

YES...

NO...

YOU DRANK AKIRA'S BLOOD ?!

THUMP

WHAM

YOUR BLOOD THAT OPENED THE DOOR MUST'VE HAD TRACES OF AKIRA'S BLOOD IN IT. THAT AWAKENED THE GUARDIANS!

NH...

THEN THAT MUST BE WHY.

WHEN THE NECROPOLIS WAS BUILT, THE VAMPIRE NATION WAS STILL AT **WAR** WITH THE WEREWOLVES.

THE PASSAGE OF TIME DOWN HERE IS **MURKY**... ALL I KNOW IS THAT IT IS SHORT.

NEVER MIND THAT... HOW LONG DOES AKIRA HAVE BEFORE THE POINT OF NO RETURN?

I KNOW YOU **DESPISE ME**, BUT AKIRA IS **IMPOR-TANT** TO YOU...

AS IMPOR-TANT AS HE IS TO ME!

IF NOTHING ELSE, DO IT FOR HIM! *PLEASE* !!

HOW *DARE* YOU EVEN ASK ME THAT?!

I HAVE NO CHOICE !

ANGIE, PLEASE!

HELP ME FOR AKIRA'S SAKE!

HELP ME!

STILL ...

YOU KNOW, I *REALLY* *HATE* THAT ABOUT YOU.

WISH

TMP

TMP

TMP

HWUP!

HTT!

HUP!

TMP

TMP

FWISH

SLICE

WAH ?!

NOT FOR YOURS.

I'LL DO IT FOR *HIS* SAKE.

THAT IS FINE WITH ME.

IMP

NO!!

AKIRA!!

GOD, THAT'S NAR-ROW.

WE HAVE REACHED THE EDGE OF THE ABYSS.

TELL ME ABOUT IT... HOW THE HELL ARE WE SUPPOSED TO GET EVERYBODY DOWN *THAT* WITH ANY SPEED AT ALL?

ALL TROOPS WILL IMMEDI-ATELY PROCEED INSIDE.

SOME-THING'S APPROACH-ING US!

SECURITY PERIMETER BREACHED !!

!

WHAT IS IT...?!

IT'S COMING IN *FAST!*

WOOSH

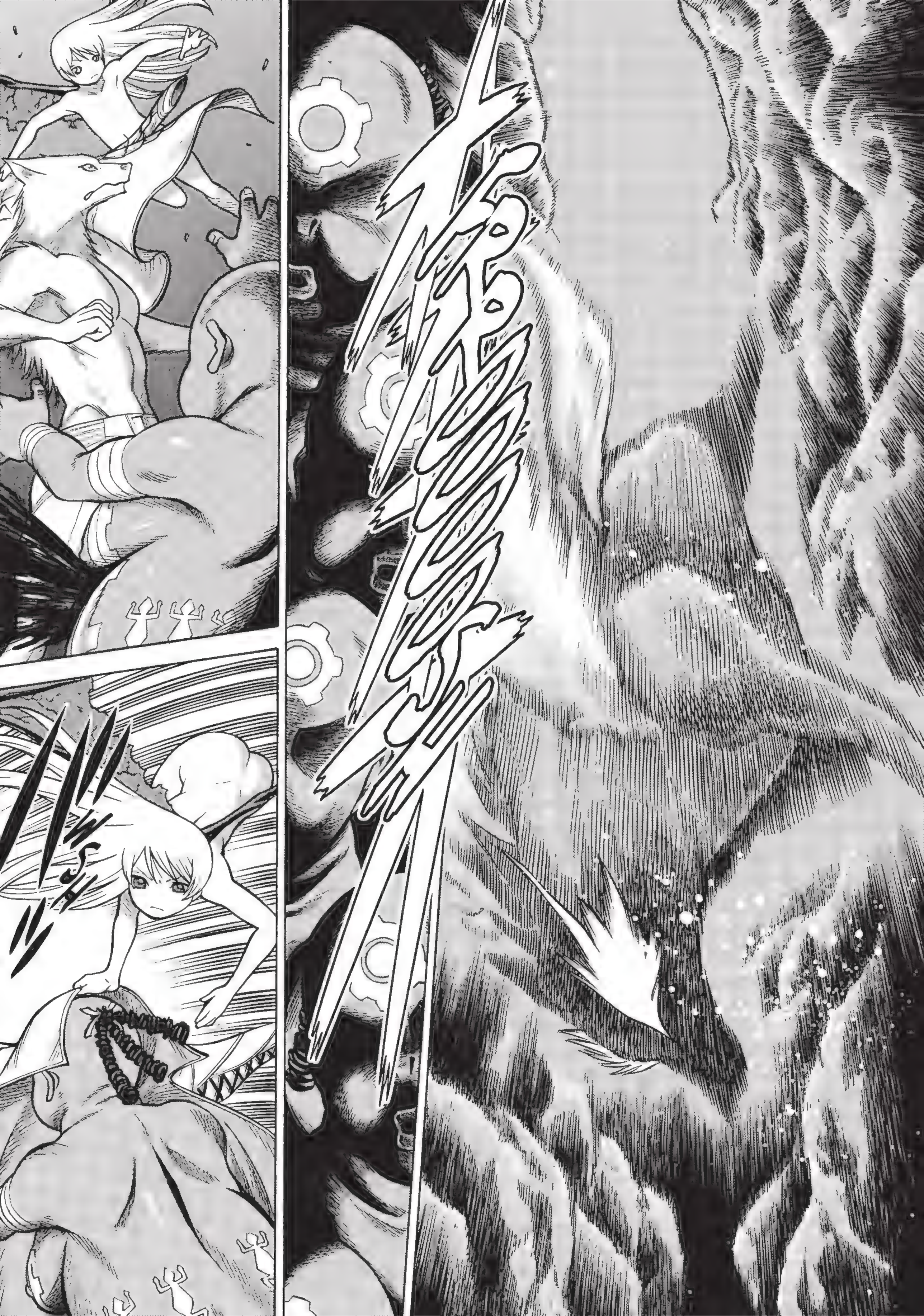
SWAK

HOLD IT RI--

WHAT THE HELL ?!

KRAK

WHOMP!!



NOT FAR !!

HOW FAR TO THE EXIT ?!

FSH

FSH OOO OOOMM MM

SHF

SHF

SHF

GRK

GRK

GRK

GRK

FSHOOO

FWAAAM

E

EW!!

EWWW!!

EW!

STAY AWAY FROM ME, YOU DIS-GUST-ING THING!!

RMBL

RMBL

RMBL

ST-STAY AWAY!!

AKIRAAA!!

HAH--!

A WOLF HOWL...?

AWOOO

THUD

AH!

RUUU

AKIRA?!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?! YOU SHOULD BE--

I'LL CLEAN UP THIS THING.

GIVE ME A MINUTE, HIME-SAN.

GRRR

GRRR

B-THMP




HUU ...?
HUU ...?
GRRR

SPLUNK

SPLIK

SPLIK

PATTER

PATTER

CAN THAT...

WHOOM

INCRED-IBLE...

TOO INCRED-IBLE.

CAN THAT *REALLY* BE AKIRA ...?

SHUUU

GOOM

THOOM

THOOM

WHAT IS THAT SOUND?

RMBL

RMBL

WHAT THE --?!

THE PALACE IS COL-LAPS-ING!!

THROOOOM

KRAK

KRAK

KRAK

KRUNCH

THE *PALACE ITSELF* IS ITS OWN LAST LINE OF DEFENSE. WHEN THE GUARDIANS FAIL, IT AUTOMATICALLY BEGINS TO FALL APART...

OH, NOW THAT'S *DEVIOUS*. NOT ONLY WERE THOSE STATUES THE PALACE'S GUARDIANS, THEY MUST HAVE ALSO BEEN ITS ***KEYSTONES!***

THIS WHOLE STRUCTURE COULD ONLY HOLD ITSELF UP FOR SO LONG WITHOUT THEM IN PLACE. SINCE THEY DIDN'T RETURN, IT'S STARTING TO **BUCKLE** UNDER ITS OWN WEIGHT!

THUMM THUMM

CRUSHING THE INTRUDERS BENEATH IT!!

CRACK

LOOK!

!

OH NO! THE EN-TRANCE --!

ANGIE, FOLLOW ME!

KLONK

WE'RE ALMOST TH--

GOOD EYES, AKIRA!

FWISH

!



RMBL RMBL RMBL RMBL RMBL RMBL

SHH!

AKIRA, HOW CAN YOU BE HERE?

SHOULDN'T YOU BE--

WHOOM

ニヤ…

WHOOOOOM

オーン

……

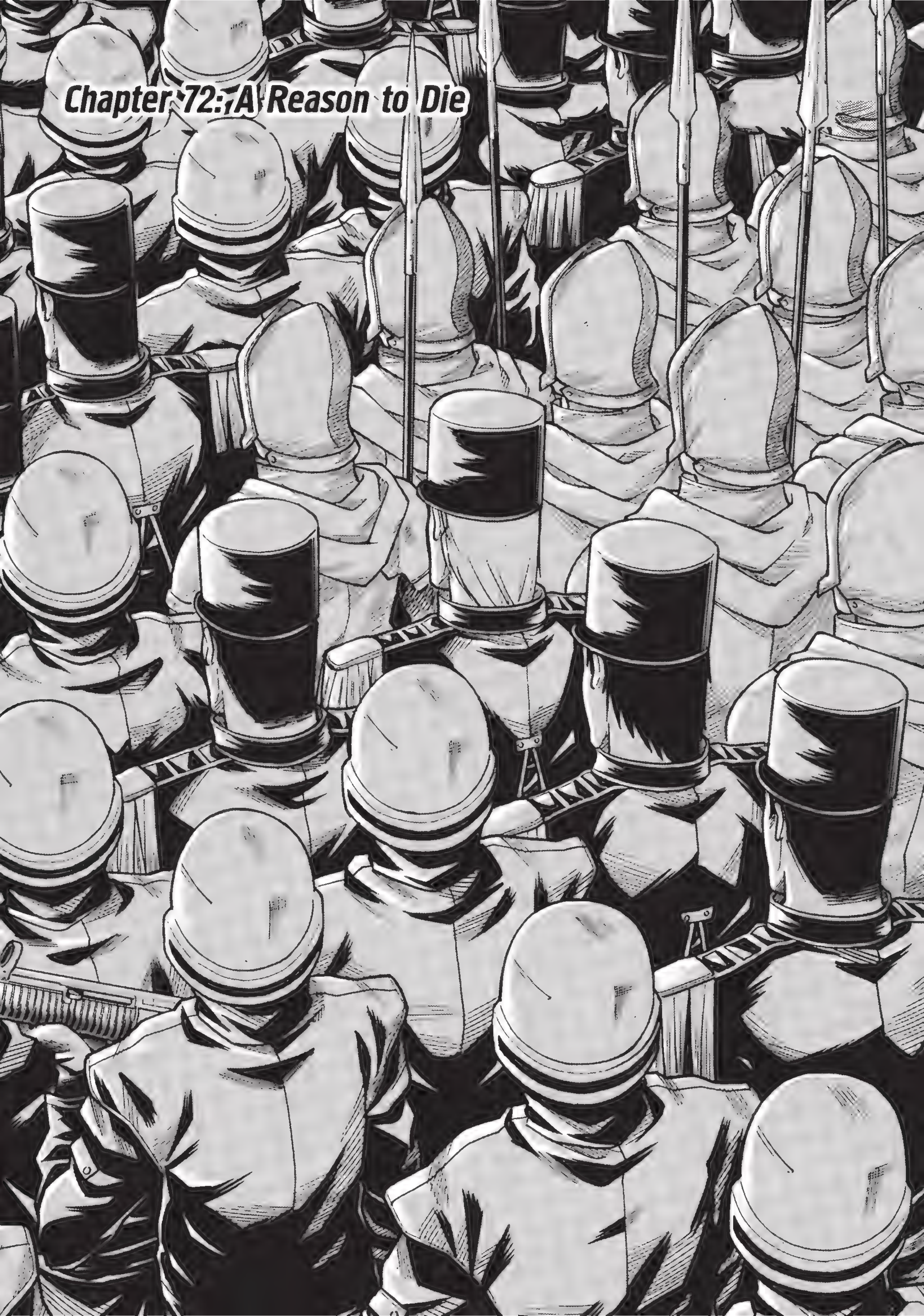
SOUNDS LIKE WE'RE NOT OUT OF THE WOODS YET.

ZMP

ZMP

ZMP

Chapter 72: A Reason to Die



HAVE THEY FOUND HER?

WE HAVE A REPORT FROM THE SCOUTING PARTY, MY LORD.

IT SEEMS SO, MY LORD.

PRINCESS MINA'S LOCATION CONFIRMED. SHE IS CURRENTLY MOVING THROUGH THE CRADLE WITH **TWO** UNIDENTIFIED COMPANIONS.

UTTERLY DESTROYED, MY LORD.

WHAT OF THE PALACE?

SHE HAS SEEN IT.

MINA... MUST HAVE GONE INSIDE.

WHAT HAP-PENED?! ANSWER ME!!

GYAAAAH!!

SKREH

UNDER-STOOD, MY LORD.

IN-CREASE THE SPEED OF OUR MARCH!

WE WILL CONTINUE OUR OBSERVA-TION.

DO NOT LET MINA OUT OF YOUR SIGHT. UNDER-STAND?!

WISH

I'M NOT SURE.

IS SOME-THING WRONG?

I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMEBODY SCREAM.

!

DUKE SCOTT?!

HOLY CRAP, IT'S THE OLD CODG-ERS!

LOOK, IT'S THE PRIN-CESS!

SHE'S ALL RIGHT!!

YOUR MAJ-ESTY!!

WHAT? HOW...? WHAT IN THE NINE HELLS ARE YOU ALL DOING *HERE*?!

OH, COME NOW.

ONCE WE KNEW WE COULD ENTER VIA THE UNDER-GROUND TUNNELS, IT WAS *EASY.*

WE ARE NEITHER BLIND NOR DEAF. **MISS NANAMI** SENT US THE DATA ON YOUR LOCATION.

BUT HOW THE HELL DID YOU FIND US *DOWN HERE?*

WELL, AKIRA HADN'T YET ARRIVED AT THE RENDEZVOUS POINT, AND WE WERE QUITE TIRED OF **WAITING.**

SO WE LEFT THE OTHER PUPS HOLDING DOWN THE FORT, AND CAME HERE TO FETCH YOU OUR-SELVES.

BAH!

A REFRESH-ING VACATION FOR US OLD FOLK. THINK *NOTHING* OF IT.

BUT... BUT THERE WAS NO NEED FOR YOU ALL TO COME SO FAR, JUST FOR MY SAKE.

UM, GRAND-PA SCOTT ...?

ANGIE IS--

.....

THAT'S RIGHT!

HUH?

AKIRA.

.....

WHAT HAP-PENED TO YOU?

!

YOU LET HER MAJESTY DRINK... YOUR BLOOD?!

AKIRA GAVE TO ME SOME OF HIS **BLOOD!** BUT INSTEAD OF GROWING *WEAKER*, HE IS AS HALE AND HEALTHY AS YOU SEE!

WHAT DOES THIS **MEAN?** WHAT IS **HAPPENING** TO HIM?!

HAVE YOU EXPERI-ENCED *ANY CHANGE?* ANY CHANGE AT ALL?!

GRAB

AH...!

YOU HAVE.

AH. GOOD.

.....

YOU HAVE.

HUH ...?

WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

YOUR MAJESTY !!

SHF

WAIT... WHY ?!

WHAT ?

FOR MANY A LONG YEAR, WE HAVE FAITHFULLY FOLLOWED THE THE CHARGE GRANTED US BY HER MAJESTY LUCRETIA TO PROTECT YOU.

IF YOU BUT ALLOW IT, WE FIVE SHALL **GLADLY** BECOME YOUR MAJESTY'S SHIELD, AND BUY AS MUCH TIME AS OUR MEAGER LIVES MAY. PLEASE, USE THAT TIME TO ESCAPE.

THE ENEMY'S FORCES APPROACH US SLOWLY, BUT SURELY.

NOW, YOUR MAJESTY, WE HUMBLY AND RESPECTFULLY REQUEST TO BE **RELEASED** FROM THAT CHARGE.

THAT IS WHAT HONOR **DEMANDED.** TO OUTLIVE ONE'S LORD IS A TERRIBLE BURDEN FOR A PACK OF PRIDEFUL YOUNG WOLVES.

BY ALL RIGHTS, THE FIVE OF US SHOULD HAVE DIED WITH HER MAJESTY LUCRETIA, 400 YEARS AGO.

WHAT? ARE YOU CRAZY ?!

AKIRA, LISTEN.

THUS WE BORE THE SHAME OF LIVING, AND HAVE SURVIVED TO THIS DAY TO GUARD YOUR MAJESTY.

BUT HER MAJESTY LUCRETIA SAID ONE THING WHICH STRUCK US TO THE CORE... "PRINCESS MINA YET LIVES."

DUKE SCOTT.

YOU AND YOUR FELLOWS HAVE DISPLAYED A **TRUE COURAGE** TO WHICH NO PALTRY WORDS OF PRAISE COULD *EVER* DO JUSTICE.

FROM NOW ON, IT IS THE DUTY OF YOU YOUNG PUPS TO GIVE YOUR LIVES IN SERVICE TO HER MAJESTY.

UNDER-STAND?

BUT...

BUT NOW... NOW THAT TIME IS PAST.

A NEW AGE HAS BEGUN.

WITH THIS, I RETURN TO YOU YOUR LIVES.

YOU ARE FREE OF ANY AND ALL BONDS TO ME.

LIVE WELL, AND DIE AS YOU CHOOSE.

AS YOU WISH, YOUR MAJ-ESTY!

I HEREBY RELIEVE YOU OF THAT CHARGE WHICH MY MOTHER LUCRETIA BESTOWED UPON YOU, CENTURIES PAST.

YOUR LONG YEARS OF LOYAL SERVICE ARE TRULY AN EXAMPLE TO US ALL.

ALL WE CAN DO IS ESCAPE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

THIS IS NO LONGER OUR BATTLE-FIELD. IT IS *THEIRS.*

COME, AKIRA. WE'RE LEAVING.

HIME-SAN!

TELL HIM THAT, AS HE ONCE SAID, WE MADE CERTAIN THAT EVEN AFTER THE DEATH OF OUR LORD, OUR LIVES WERE NOT WASTED ONES.

AKIRA, ONE THING... GIVE YOUR FATHER A MESSAGE FROM US.

WE ARE... *GRATEFUL* TO HIM.

NOW... ***GO!***

WSH

NEVER LOOK BACK!

DON'T LOOK BACK, AKIRA!

NEVER!!

DAMMIT!

DAMN IT ALL TO HELL!!

FARE THEE WELL.

OLDER AND OLDER YOU GREW, UNTIL YOU FINALLY RELEASED OUR HAND AND FLEW AWAY ON YOUR OWN LIFE'S PATH...

DEAR CHILD. BE-LOVED CHILD.

OUR LIGHT, AND OUR LIFE.

YEP. THEY'RE GONE.

THEY HAVE LEFT...

ALL RIGHT, YOU OLD COOTS.

I HATE TO INTERRUPT YOUR SENTIMENTAL RAMBLINGS, BUT WE HAVE *GUESTS.*

A WHOLE BIG MOB OF THEM, TOO.

I COUNT AT LEAST THREE...

NO, *FIVE* HUNDRED OF THEM.

REALLY, NOW.

HEH. LOOKS LIKE ROZEN-MANN SCRAPED TOGETHER EVERYBODY HE COULD.

HEH HEH.

WHY ARE YOU LAUGH-ING?

SAYS HE WITH THE *GIANT SMIRK* ON *HIS* FACE!

I MUST SAY OUR OPPONENTS ARE A LITTLE... *LACKING.*

THOUGH, HONESTLY ...

AT LONG LAST, THE FIELD IS OURS, AND OURS **ALONE.**

HAH!

WHO COULD HELP BUT SMILE NOW?

FARE THEE WELL !!

WHEN NEXT WE MEET, MAY IT BE IN THE *PRESENCE* OF HER MAJESTY *LUCRETIA!*

WELL THEN, GENTLE-MEN. LET US BEGIN!

ENEMY SIGHT-ED!

DIRECTLY AHEAD, DISTANCE 200 METERS!!

BUT WHAT OF YOU *NOW?*

WHENCE THE RUGGED LINES OF HEAVY INFANTRY? WHENCE THE WAVES OF POLISHED SPEARHEADS, CHARGING TOWARDS THE ENEMY?

THEIR DISCIPLINED LINES AND INTIMIDATING NUMBERS COULD **CRUSH** ANY FOE. THEY WERE WELL AND RIGHTLY KNOWN AS AN **ARMY OF TERROR.**

IT WAS NOT LONG AGO THAT ROZENMANN'S ARMY WAS A THING OF **EXQUISITE MAGNIFI-CENCE.**

YOU HAVE GOTTEN OLD, ROZEN-MANN! OLD AND FRAIL!!

NOW YOU ARE NAUGHT BUT A MOB OF *WEAK-LINGS!*

LET US SHOW YOU WHAT IT *TRULY* MEANS TO BE A *WARRIOR!!*

THIS WILL *HARDLY* BE A BATTLE AT ALL!!

!

WHUK

WONG!

WONG!

WONG!

MANGY OLD MUTTS!

WHAT IS THERE TO FEAR FROM A HANDFUL OF *OLD DOGS?* **CRUSH THEM!!**

IT IS THE BEOWULF ELDERS OF THE EARTH SENATE, MY LORD.

THEY ARE IMPEDING OUR ADVANCE!

GYAAAAAH

WHAT IS ALL THIS FUSS?

AAAA
AH!

FILL TIME

OH, BE WARNED!

WHAT'S WRONG, YOU **WIMPS**?! DO NONE OF YOU WANT TO MAKE A **NAME** FOR YOUR-SELVES?!

YOU FACE THE **GREATEST** OPPONENTS OF YOUR LIFETIME! WILL NONE CLAIM THE **GLORY** OF TAKING OUR HEADS?!

TIHWAP

OUR HEADS MAY BE FOR THE TAKING...

BUT THEY WILL NOT COME CHEAPLY.

AAAAH!!

GYAH!!

WHOOM

HOOOOOH

YAAAAAAAAAAAH

7...

SLICE

8.

HUK

9.

SNAP

NOW, HOW MANY KILLS WILL *THIS* BLADE LAST?

HRM...

THAT BLADE WAS ONLY STRONG ENOUGH TO HANDLE *9* KILLS.

GRAB

RAAAH!!

SLICE

WHUMP

YOUR INTER-FERENCE IS UN-NEEDED HERE!

DO NOT SULLY A WAR-RIOR'S LAST STAND!!

!

KONK

!!

NEVER THROW AWAY YOUR PRIDE. DO ME AT LEAST THAT ONE FAVOR.

.....

WE MAY HAVE CHOSEN TO RALLY BEHIND DIFFERENT FLAGS, BUT WE ARE BOTH STILL *WOLVES.*

GRAND-FATHER...

.....

WOOSH

HAH!!

HAA!!

RMBL

RMBL

RMBL

HAA!!

I KNOW! I KNOW!

BE CARE-FUL, AKIRA!

ROZENMANN'S CASTLE IS *COLLAPSING!* THE SHOCK-WAVES ARE DESTABILIZING THIS ENTIRE CAVE SYSTEM!!

DAMMIT, A CAVE-IN...

DID THE WHOLE TUNNEL COLLAPSE PAST HERE?

THERE'S A GAP IN THE STONES. WE MAY BE ABLE TO SQUEEZE THROUGH THERE!

NO, LOOK!

WE MUST KEEP PRESS-ING FOR-WARD!

WE *MUST*, NO MATTER WHAT!!

GSH

KRUMP

BE-
CAUSE
IF WE
DO NOT
SUC-
CEED...

WE
WILL
NEVER
BE
ABLE
TO
FACE
THEM
WITH
PRIDE
AGAIN!!

!

YOU CAME SEARCHING FOR US, TOO?

YOUR MAJ-ESTY, YOU'RE ALL RIGHT!

PRAISE THE GODS!

AKIRA!

YOUR MAJ-ESTY!!

AH!

I SEE...

.....

WHAT OF THE ELDERS?

I UNDER-STAND.

WE ARE LEAVING AT ONCE!!

EVERY-ONE, PULL OUT!!

KLANK

HFF

HFF

HFF

SIIIGH...

I HATE GETTING OLD.

OH. YOU TOO, EH?

THUMP

THE FIGHT BACK THEN WAS A LOT LIKE THIS ONE, WASN'T IT?

REMEMBER WHEN WE WERE IN **BUCHAREST**, BACK IN 1842...

HEH. IT'S ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT THE **LADIES** WITH YOU.

SHF

YOU SAID YOU JUST COULDN'T GET IT UP ANYMORE.

OH, SO *THAT'S* THE CHALLENGE YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT, EH?

BUT WHEN WE HIT THAT LOVELY LITTLE **BROTHEL** AFTERWARDS, YOU CAPTIVATED RIGHT AWAY, YOU CAPTIVATED THE PRETTIEST BLONDE IN THE WHOLE PLACE.

YEAH.

THE REAL CHALLENGE DIDN'T START UNTIL *AFTER* OUR BAYONETS HAD BROKEN OFF.

TMP

TMP

TMP

THAT IT DID.

WSH

GODS...

YOU WERE THE FIRST TO CALL IT QUITS BACK THEN, TOO.

I'LL BE JOINING YOU SOON!!

WAIT BUT A MINUTE, MY FRIEND.

AH, WELL.

THK

FWISH

BLADES THESE DAYS SIMPLY HAVE NO RESILIENCE AT ALL...

HMPH.

TMP TMP TMP TMP

I WILL HAVE TO LEAVE A COMPLAINT OR TWO WITH THE SMITHS.

I HAVE DONE ALL THAT WAS REQUIRED OF ME. ALL THAT IS LEFT IS TO...

KLNG

RMBL

NOW, THEN...

SRIISH

FZK

TAT

TAT

TAT

TAT

TAT

BRAT

FRI

TAT

TAT

TAT

TAKE 'IM DOWN!

FIRE! FIRE!

HUH ?!

KA-BOOM

HOW ARE THEY DOING THIS?

THERE ARE ONLY *FIVE* OF THEM!

HOW IS THIS EVEN HAP-PEN-ING?!

WSH!!!

MY LORD, LOOK OUT!!

!

ONLY *FIVE* !!

MY LORD!

WOOSH

SPLIK

SIR! SIIIR!!

TNNG

PLNK

THUNK

WI...

THE
WITH-
DRAW
!!
EVERY-
ONE
PULL
BACK!!
KRRRRSH
MY LADY
LUCRETIA...
WE
COME
...
TO
YOUR
SIDE
AGAIN...


RUINED
RUINED
RUINED

7th KREW

HIME-SAN...?

SWIFE

SOME-ONE GIVE ME A BLADE!

BRAVE WARRIORS ...

FORGIVE ME FOR HAVING NAUGHT ELSE TO HONOR YOU WITH.

BWFF

BWFF

BWFF

MAY THE VALKYRIES CARRY YOUR *SOULS* TO VALHALLA...

IN CELEBRA-TION.

Chapter 73: Contagion



PACKAGE FOR YOU, YAMA-MOTO-SAN.

HELLO? YAMA-MOTO-SAN?

Hybrid

HOME DELIVERY

HELLOOO?

YAMA-MOTO-SAN?

RATTLE

.....

THUNK

AT LEAST TWO ARE PRESENT.

CONFIRMED.

SOMEONE IS INSIDE.

SLIGHT NOISES CONFIRMED.

THEY'RE VAMPIRES, ALL RIGHT.

Bip

Bip

Bip

HEAT SIGNATURES BELOW 28 DEGREES CELSIUS...

SHOK

BEGIN OPERATION.

SHOK

CHUNK

BLAM

ENTRY HALL, CLEAR.

HALL-WAY NEXT.

SEARCH THE LIVING ROOM.

THEY MAY TRY TO AMBUSH US.

BE CARE-FUL.

KRUNCH

THOSH

WHAK

THOMP

SPAK

BWOMF

NET 'EM!!

GAAAH!!

GYAK!

FWISH

FWISH

PSHH

THUD

WHOOSH

YEAAAH!

BWOOF

KRUNCH

THANK YOU SO MUCH!

WELL DONE!

NOWHERE WAS THIS MORE EVIDENT THAN IN THE SUBURBS, WHERE GRISLY SCENES BECAME ALL TOO COMMON AN OCCURRENCE.

AFTER THE INITIAL OUTBREAK, VAMPIRE ACTIVITY IN THE GREATER TOKYO AREA BEGAN TO INCREASE STEADILY IN INTENSITY AND VIOLENCE.

*SAT (Special Assault Team) is an elite counter-terrorism unit under the Japanese National Police Agency.

HOWEVER, VAMPIRISM WAS SPREADING THROUGHOUT THE CITY AT A GEOMETRIC RATE. EVEN ROUTINE SAT PURGES PROVED INEFFECTIVE AT CURBING THE GROWTH.

IN RESPONSE, THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT ORDERED THE CREATION OF A SPECIAL ANTI-VAMPIRE TACTICAL UNIT, BASED OUT OF SAT*.

GIVEN BROAD AND SWEEPING RIGHTS, THE NEWLY-FORMED UNIT IMMEDIATELY BEGAN A VICIOUS CAMPAIGN OF EXTERMINATION, DESTROYING ANYONE SUSPECTED OF BEING A ROGUE VAMPIRE.

ANY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION WITH OFFICES IN TOKYO IMMEDIATELY MOVED ELSEWHERE. TOURISM DRIED UP ALMOST COMPLETELY.

THE FOREIGN MEDIA MADE MATTERS WORSE. GOING FOR SENSATIONALISM OVER STATISTICAL PROOF, THEY BEGAN REPORTING TO THE WORLD THAT **HALF** OF TOKYO'S RESIDENTS HAD BECOME VAMPIRES.

THE NATIONAL NEWS MEDIA BEGAN FANNING THE FLAMES, DECLARING...

"THE BLIND IS NO LONGER A SINGLE DISTRICT OF TOKYO. **TOKYO ITSELF** IS NOW THE BLIND."

SOON, ALMOST NO ONE TRAVELED INTO TOKYO FROM ANY NEARBY DISTRICT.

NOT ONLY THAT, "NEIGHBORHOOD WATCHES" BEGAN TO SPRING UP. THESE VOLUNTEER GROUPS WOULD BARRICADE TRAIN STATION WICKETS AND FORCIBLY SEARCH ANY BUSINESSMAN RETURNING HOME FROM TOKYO, TO "PROVE" HE WASN'T A VAMPIRE.

IT WASN'T UNUSUAL TO HEAR OF PEOPLE BEING NEARLY BEATEN TO DEATH IF THEY REFUSED TO ACQUIESCE.

#vampire Search Results

Tweets / Top

kazuhiro (Yamada Kazuhiro)
[PUBLIC] Lorenzo Pharmaceuticals is owned by the Tepe
artificial blood called "Stigma" Hospital patients who rece
artificial blood became vampires! Ask your hospital to sto
ceuticals products today!
#vampire 10 sec ago

boom boom
[PUBLIC] Lorenzo Pharmaceuticals is owned by the Tepe
artificial blood called "Stigma" Hospital patients who rece
artificial blood became vampires! Ask your hospital to stop using Lorenzo Pharmaceuticals products today!
#vampire 20 sec ago

tintin (TamTam)
[PUBLIC] Lorenzo Pharmaceuticals is owned by the Tepes family! They make the artificial blood called "Stigma" Hospital patients who received a transfusion of this artificial blood became vampires! Ask your hospital to stop using Lorenzo Pharmaceuticals products today!
#vampire 1 min. ago

Bonbon (Young Master)
1st hand source! RT@Rumpelstiltzchen ~A hospital patient who received a Stigma blood transfer turned into a vampire!
#vampire 1 min ago

CHIKUTAKU (Watchmaker)
[PUBLIC] Be careful! Vampires have a gel that wi
because you see someone outside in the sun doe
#vampire 2 min ago

Rumpelstiltzchen (Little Dwarf)
[PUBLIC] Lorenzo Pharmaceuticals is owned by t
artificial blood called "Stigma" Hospital patients w
artificial blood became vampires! Ask your hospit
ceuticals products today!
#vampire 3 min ago

Rumpelstiltzchen (Little Dwarf)
[PUBLIC] RT@Natalie ~A home in Nakano put up
vampire from breaking in Worth giving it a try.

BUT THE MEDIA OUTLETS WEREN'T THE ONLY CULPRITS.

INTERNET CHAT ROOMS AND MESSAGE BOARDS WERE ABUZZ WITH RUMOR, LEADING TO A GROWING SENSE OF UNEASE IN THE AREAS NEIGHBORING TOKYO.

THE MEDIA'S YELLOW JOURNALISM ONLY UNDERSCORED THAT PARANOIA.

A home in Nakano put up garlic wards and it prevented a
n. Worth giving it a try.

work against vampires? #vampire

pires have a gel that will protect them from sunlight! Just
e outside in the sun doesn't mean they aren't a vampire!

Rumpelstiltzchen (Little Dwarf)
[PUBLIC] Be careful! Vampires have a gel that will protect them from sunlight! Just because you see someone outside in the sun doesn't mean they aren't a vampire!

DAYTIME SCHEDULES WERE ALSO CUT TO UNDER HALF OF THEIR USUAL NUMBER.

NO TRAIN SERVICE AFTER 5 PM.

SOON, THE PRIVATELY HELD COMPANIES THAT MAKE UP THE JAPAN RAILWAYS GROUP BEGAN CANCELLING ALL TRAIN SERVICE IN AND OUT OF TOKYO AFTER SUNDOWN.

ALL ROADS LEADING INTO TOKYO WERE CLOSED OFF, WITH THE TOKYO POLICE CONDUCTING THOROUGH SEARCHES OF EVERY VEHICLE AND ALL CARGO PASSING THROUGH.

EVEN WORSE WERE THE VEHICLE TRAFFIC BLOCKADES.

THE ECONOMIC REPERCUS-SIONS WERE **ENORMOUS.** SEVERAL EXPERTS SAID THE CITY OF TOKYO, AS A WHOLE, WAS OPERATING AT LESS THAN 40% OF ITS USUAL RATE.

DEPRIVED OF THEIR WORKFORCE AND WITH THE FLOW OF GOODS BROUGHT ALMOST TO A HALT, TOKYO BUSINESSES BEGAN TO COLLAPSE AT AN ALARMING RATE.

THE CITY COUNCIL PUT FORTH A PROPOSAL THAT ALL TOKYO RESIDENTS BE TEMPORARILY EVACUATED, BUT NO NEIGHBORING AREA WOULD ACCEPT THE REFUGEES.

AND THEIR REFUSAL WASN'T DUE TO THE STAGGERING NUMBER OF PEOPLE IT WOULD INVOLVE.

THE UNUSUALLY HARSH PERSECUTION OF THE FEW PEOPLE WHO MANAGED TO ESCAPE FROM TOKYO EARLY ON ATTESTED TO THIS FACT.

YOMIURI SHIMBUN

Central Dentistry

MEDIA SENSATIONALISM, RAMPANT INTERNET RUMORS, AND A GENERAL LACK OF UNDERSTANDING ABOUT VAMPIRES LED TO THE GROWING FEAR THAT AN "EPIDEMIC" WAS ON THE LOOSE.

THERE IS A *VERY STRANGE* MAN WHO HANGS AROUND MY NEIGHBORHOOD.

UM...

DENIED THE OPPORTUNITY FOR AN ESCAPE TO SAFETY, TRAPPED TOKYO RESIDENTS STRUGGLED WITH AN INCREASING SENSE OF PARANOIA. MORE AND MORE OFTEN, THEY WOULD VENT THAT FEAR THROUGH ATTACKS ON OTHERS.

MAYBE THEY'RE **VAMPIRES.**

YES... DEFINITELY ...

THERE *HAS* TO BE SOMETHING GOING ON THERE, RIGHT?

IN FACT, I HAVEN'T SEEN THEM IN ALMOST **THREE YEARS!**

THERE'S A FAMILY LIVING NEXT DOOR, BUT I HAVEN'T SEEN THEIR CHILDREN IN A LONG TIME...

YES... YES, IT IS **ALWAYS** AFTER DARK.

HE STAYS IN THE PARK ALONE FOR HOURS ON END, AND I DON'T LIKE THE WAY HE LOOKS AT THE CHILDREN.

THE CITY LOOKED SOLID... NO EARTHQUAKE OR FLOOD WAS CAUSING THE CITY TO VISIBLY CRUMBLE.

WHO'S GOING TO PROTECT US?!

HE'S A VAMPIRE! GOTTA BE!

THAT GUY'S DEFINITELY SUSPICIOUS.

Y'KNOW, I HEARD HIM SAY SOME REALLY STRANGE THINGS THE OTHER DAY.

PLEASE, YOU HAVE TO LOOK INTO THIS! I JUST KNOW THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH HIM!

IT'S OBVIOUS! I MEAN, HE LOOKS LIKE A VAMPIRE!

HOW DO I KNOW HE'S A VAMPIRE? I JUST DO!

KILL THEM!

THE LAW IS USELESS IN THESE KINDS OF EMERGENCIES.

WE NEED TO MAKE AN *EXAMPLE* OUT OF THEM! SHOW THESE BLOODSUCKERS THAT WE MEAN BUSINESS!

JUST KILL 'EM ALL! KILL ANYBODY WHO'S ACTING SUSPICIOUS!

I'M NOT THE VAMPIRE, SHE IS! SHE'S JUST TRYING TO MAKE IT LOOK LIKE I AM TO TAKE THE SUSPICION OFF OF HER!

THE GOVERNMENT SEES US AS SACRIFICIAL LAMBS.

I CAN'T TRUST ANYONE ANYMORE.

SOMETHING HAS TO BE DONE. WE NEED TO TAKE MATTERS INTO OUR OWN HANDS!

PLEASE, I DON'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT IT ANYMORE!

THE POLICE NEED TO STEP THINGS UP! SHOW US THAT THEY'RE DOING *SOMETHING!*

I'M SO SCARED, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO!

WHO CARES IF HE WASN'T A VAMPIRE? A JERK LIKE HIM DIDN'T DESERVE TO LIVE ANYWAY.

DIE! DIE, DIE, DIE!!

I'M NOT GONNA LET SOME DAMN VAMP FEED ON ME!

HOW CAN I PROVE I'M NOT A VAMPIRE?

I GET SO WORRIED EVERY TIME MY DAUGHTER STAYS OUT LATE.

I'M SO SCARED! EVERYBODY LOOKS LIKE A VAMPIRE TO ME NOW!

BUT WHAT CAN WE DO?!

I WILL DO WHATEVER I MUST TO PROTECT MY FAMILY.

HE'S GOTTA BE A VAMPIRE! JUST LOOK AT HIM!

I CAN'T STAND IT!

THERE ARE AT LEAST THREE VAMPIRES LIVING NEAR ME. I *KNOW* IT!

I'M NOT A VAMPIRE! I SWEAR!

BUT THIS WAS WITHOUT A DOUBT A DISASTER, AND IT WAS SLOWLY BUT SURELY DRAGGING THE ENTIRE CITY TO THE BRINK OF RUIN.

THIS IS WAR! IT'S US VERSUS THEM!!

EVERYBODY'S GONE INSANE!

SOMEBODY CALL THE COPS! THAT GUY'S A VAMPIRE!!

DO SO, AND I SHALL SEND IN AN *EVEN GREATER* VGS FORCE THAN BEFORE.

THEY SHALL ROOT OUT **EVERY** LAST ROGUE VAMPIRE IN YOUR FAIR CITY FOR YOU AND DESTROY THEM, WITHOUT FAIL. IS THAT NOT WHAT YOU WANT?

YOUR MAJESTY, I AM AFRAID IT IS THE VGS INTERVENTION THAT *CAUSED* THIS PROBLEM IN THE FIRST PLACE.

TO CEDE *ALL AUTHORITY* IN THIS OPERATION TO **ME.**

THUS I HAVE ASKED YOU, TIME AND TIME AGAIN...

THAT THEY MOST CERTAINLY DID!

HOWEVER, IT WAS *YOUR* GOVERNMENT WHO IMPOSED AN UPPER LIMIT ON THE FORCE WE COULD BRING TO BEAR, THUS ROBBING US OF THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A COMPLETE AND **DECISIVE** STRIKE.

THE VGS'S ORIGINAL OPERATION WAS *FAR* FROM THOROUGH.

THEY FOUND AND DESTROYED MANY ROGUES, YES, BUT THEY ENDED UP **SCATTERING** WHAT HAD BEEN ONLY A FEW CONCENTRATED ROGUE CAMPS.

ANYONE WITH AN OUNCE OF STRATEGY KNOWS SENDING THEM AS A COHESIVE FORCE IS *FAR MORE PREFERABLE.* IT SEEMS YOUR COUNTRY LEARNED **LITTLE** FROM ITS PREVIOUS WAR.

IT IS CONSIDERED THE VERY **HEIGHT** OF FOOLISHNESS TO SPLIT ONE'S FORCES AND SEND THEM INTO BATTLE SUCCESSIVELY.

CLENCH

WHAT OTHER WAYS ARE THERE?

IF YOU HAVE ANY IDEAS, I WILL *GLADLY* ENTERTAIN THEM.

HISTORY LESSONS ASIDE, YOUR MAJESTY, THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT RESPECTFULLY REQUESTS YOUR **AID** IN DEALING WITH THESE ROGUE VAMPIRES IN WAYS *OTHER THAN* MILITARY FORCE!

HMPH. WELL, I AM SURE YOU HAVE MORE **VALUABLE** USES FOR YOUR TIME THAN MERELY STANDING THERE, HOLDING DOWN MY FLOOR.

YOU ARE DIS-MISSED.

GOTOH-SAN...

THE **TRUE** PRINCESS MINA IS THE ONE WHO PRESENTLY GRACES THIS THRONE.

SHE WOULDN'T JUST SIT THERE AND... AND **WATCH!**

THE PRINCESS MINA I KNOW WOULDN'T DO THIS.

WELL, VERA-SAMA?!

.....

SO IS *BLOOD-LINE* THE ONLY THING THAT COM-MANDS YOUR **LOYALTY?** IS THAT IT?!

DON'T YOU CARE *AT ALL* ABOUT THE **BONDS** YOU HAVE FORGED DURING HER REIGN?

THE LOT OF YOU *DISGUST* ME.

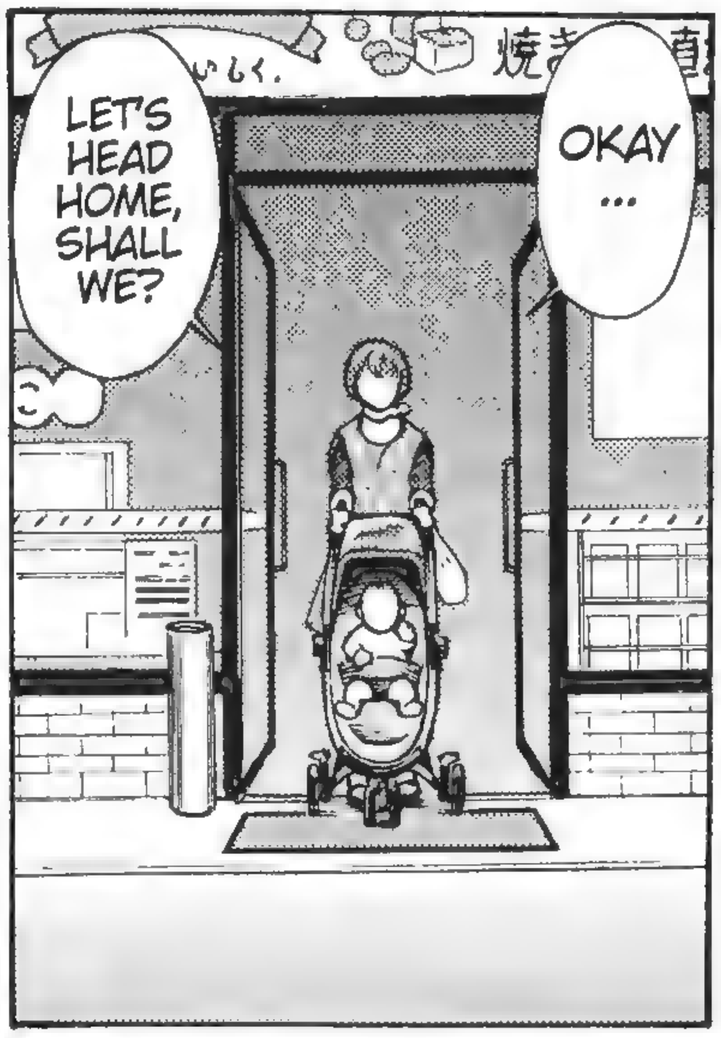
.....

GOD...


Fresh!
Direct Delivery
OKAY... GOOD.
YES...


NOT AS WELL. ALL THE SHELVES ARE EMPTY...
WE ALREADY STOCKED UP ON RYOTARO'S FORMULA, SO THAT AT LEAST SHOULD BE GOOD. OKAY, SEE YOU.
HM? ME?
I'M GLAD. I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D BE ABLE TO GET ANY.
I'M SURE THEY'LL ALL BE HAPPY TO FINALLY HAVE SOME.

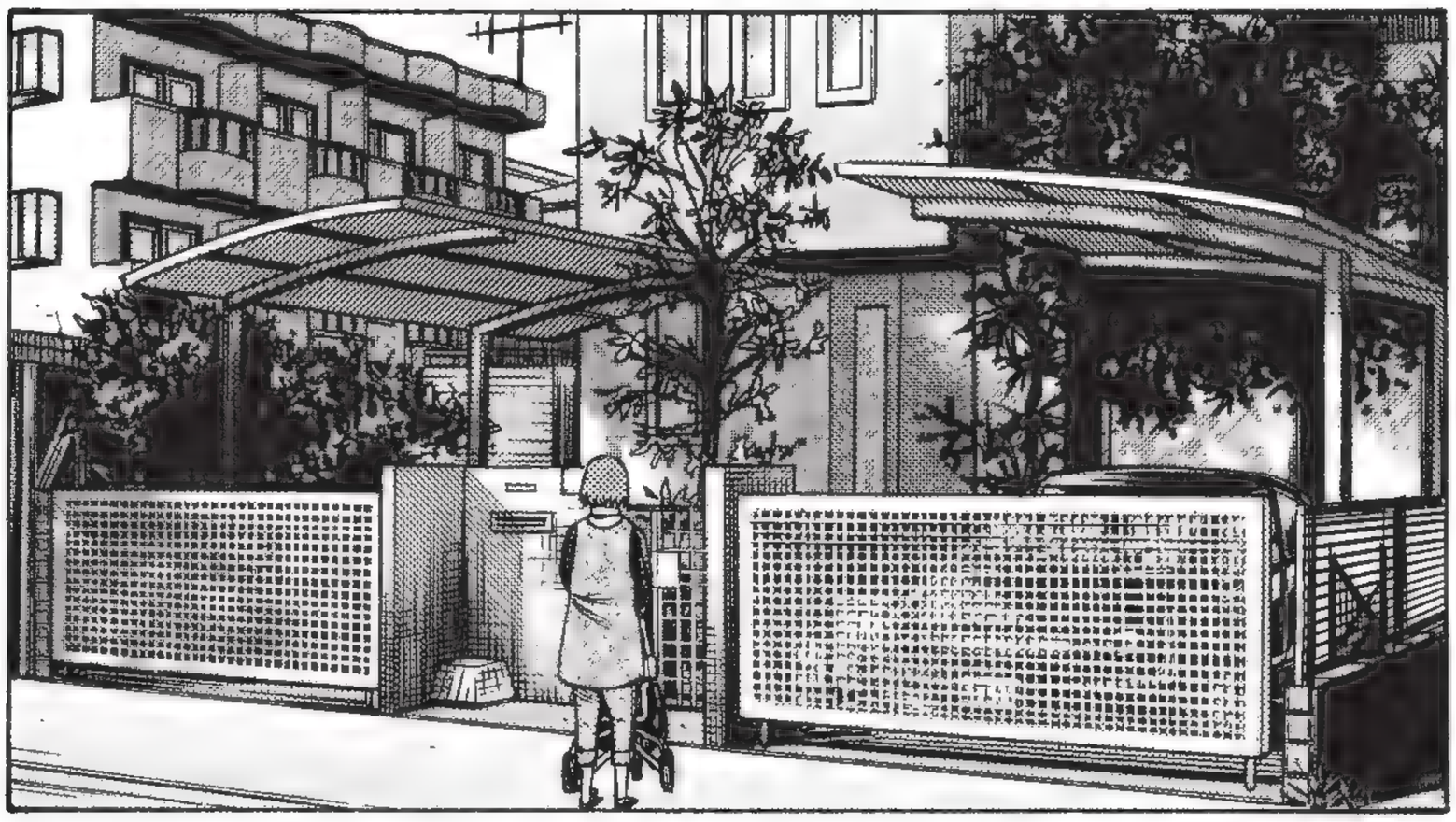

HAPPY YAKU


LET'S HEAD HOME, SHALL WE?
OKAY...

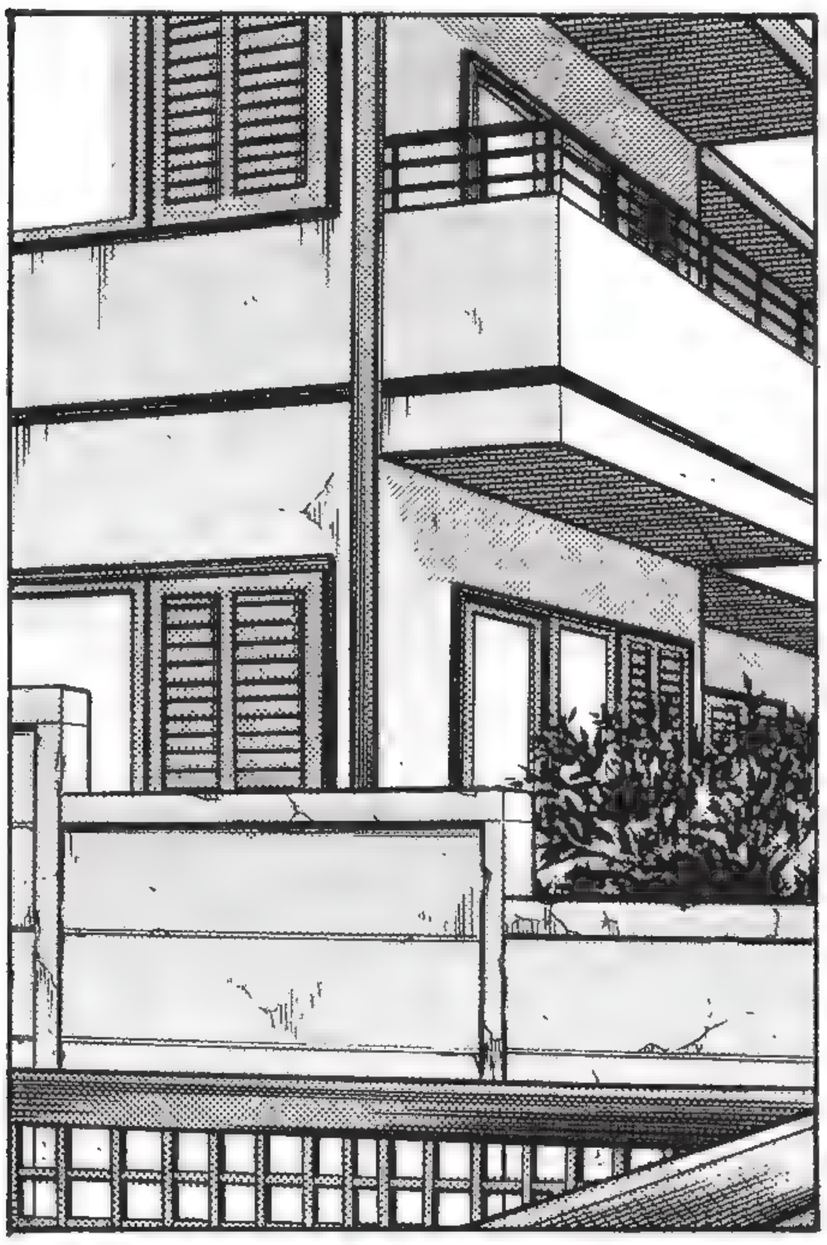

SAY "BYE-BYE" TO PAPA, RYO-CHAN!
PAAA!

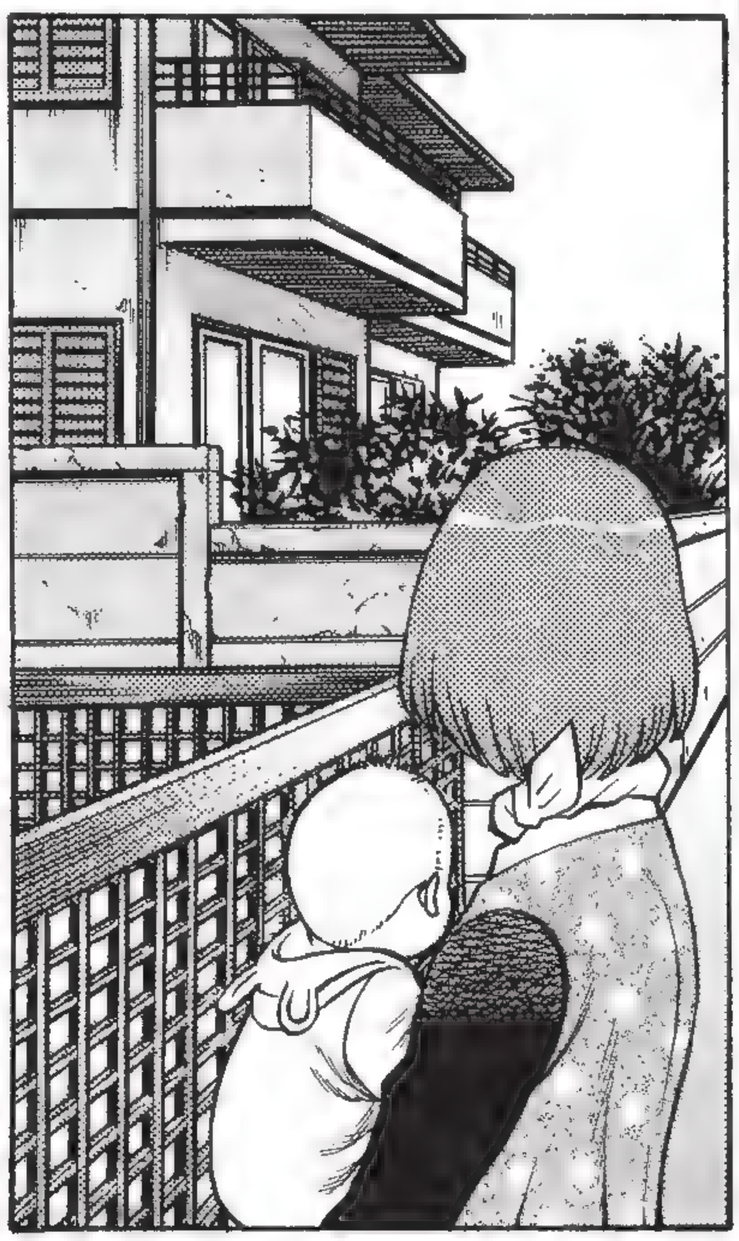



ANTI-
VAMPIRE
GOODS!!
SALE!
HOLY WATER
CRUCIFIXES
HOLY WATER
GARLIC




IT'S NAPPY-NAP TIME! ♬
LITTLE BABY TANUKI-SAN! ♬





I HEAR KIMURA-SAN HASN'T GONE TO WORK IN DAYS, EITHER...

YOU HAVEN'T SEEN OR HEARD ANYTHING... *UNUSUAL*, HAVE YOU? YOU *ARE* THEIR NEIGHBORS, AFTER ALL.

THE NEIGHBOR-HOOD WATCH HASN'T SEEN HIM COME THROUGH THE STATION.

YOU KNOW, NO ONE HAS SEEN THE KIMURA FAMILY IN **QUITE** SOME TIME.

KYAA!

HERE, I HAVE SOME-THING FOR YOU.

SHFL

SHFL

ALL RIGHT THEN. OH, YES!

I WAS SO WORRIED WHEN I NOTICED YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANY **PROTECTIONS** OUT, SO I BOUGHT A STRAND FOR YOU.

GARLIC.

MAYBE THEY MANAGED TO **EVACUATE?** I DID HEAR THEM MENTION THEY HAD FAMILY IN TOCHIGI.

I...I CAN'T SAY THAT I HAVE!

OH, REALLY?

IT'S ACTUALLY SURPRISINGLY DIFFICULT TO FIND ANY TRUE INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR HABITS AND CUSTOMS.

NOW, THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT!

MY GRAND-SON SAID HE LOOKED IT UP ON THE INTERNET.

SO WE DECIDED NOT TO, Y'KNOW...

AHA HA HA...

BUT, UM, GARLIC DOESN'T AFFECT REAL VAMPIRES.

O-OH, THANK YOU.

WHEW!

PLEASE, KEEP THE GARLIC FOR YOUR-SELF.

A-ANYWAY, I THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR CONCERN, BUT WE'LL BE OKAY.

WE'RE HOME!

ARE YOU SURE?

OTHERWISE, THE ENTIRE SPECIAL DISTRICT LIAISON'S OFFICE IS **MEANING-LESS!**

WE CANNOT JUST LEAVE THINGS AT THAT.

WE HAVE TO FIND SOMETHING WE CAN DO... *ANYTHING.*

SOONER OR LATER, ONE OF THEM IS GONNA **POP.**

EVEN WITHOUT THE BUND BEING SO **PIGHEADED** ABOUT EVERYTHING, THE GOVERNMENT'S BEING *WAAAY* TOO INDECISIVE.

GRAND-FATHER ...?

WELL, IN THAT CASE, YOUR TARGET REALLY SHOULDN'T BE MINA-HIME.

THERE'S *SOMEONE ELSE* YOU SHOULD BE GOING AFTER.

GOD, I *KNEW* THIS WAS GONNA HAPPEN!

TURN IT TO THE NEWS! ***NOW!!***

R-R-R-R-R-R

OF COURSE, IT'S ALWAYS POSSIBLE THAT'S THE WHOLE *POINT* OF--

HN...

HN.

YEAH?

UPON HEARING THIS, TOKYO MAYOR NISHIMURA CONVENED AN EMERGENCY SESSION OF THE CITY COUNCIL.

TOKYO MAYOR PROPOSES UNPRECEDENTED ACTION

--LITTLE HEADWAY. THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE SPECIAL DISTRICT LIAISON'S OFFICE AND THE VAMPIRE BLIND DREW TO A CLOSE, WITH NO PROGRESS ON EITHER SIDE.

I'M SURE IT WAS SENT OUT *RIGHT AWAY* TO ALL THE INTERESTED PARTIES.

A LEAK, UNDOUBTEDLY.

HOW COULD THEY **KNOW THIS** ALREADY ?!

WHAT?! BUT WE *JUST LEFT* THOSE NEGOTIATIONS!

MAYOR NISHIMURA PROPOSED A MOTION CALLING FOR THE **IMMEDIATE TERMINATION** OF THE CITY'S LEASE TO THE TEPES FAMILY OF THE SPECIAL DISTRICT.

THE MOTION ALSO INCLUDES A DEMAND FOR THE EVICTION OF ALL VAMPIRES WITHIN CITY LIMITS. THE MOTION PASSED **UNANIMOUSLY.**

I AM **FULLY PREPARED** TO TAKE THOROUGH AND **DECISIVE** ACTION TO DEAL WITH THOSE BEASTS, IF NECESSARY.

I QUESTION THE GOVERNMENT'S JUDGMENT IN ALLOWING THOSE CREATURES TO LIVE SO CLOSE TO THE DECENT PEOPLE OF THIS CITY! THAT ACTION PUT MANY INNOCENT CIVILIAN LIVES AT NEEDLESS RISK.

Tokyo Mayor
Nishimura Ryūtaro

AFTER ALL, WHAT CAUSE IS THERE TO HESITATE?

WHEN YOU COME RIGHT DOWN TO IT, THEY AREN'T EVEN **HUMAN!!**

!!

AT THAT POINT, THE "BODY" WOULD TYPICALLY BE REMOVED TO THE BLIND.

ACCORDING TO CURRENT LAW, WHEN A PERSON BECOMES INFECTED BY THE VAMPIRISM VIRUS AND MUTATES INTO A VAMPIRE, THAT PERSON IS THEN CONSIDERED **LEGALLY DEAD.**

ACTUALLY, WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT, **IT ISN'T.**

THE MAYOR'S SPEECH CAN CERTAINLY BE CONSIDERED... **SEVERE.**

I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS!

.....

BUT IN TOKYO, THEY'RE STILL ONLY A CORPSE. SO IF A HUMAN WAS ATTACKED BY A VAMPIRE AND KILLED IT IN SELF-DEFENSE, ACCORDING TO THE LAW, **NO CRIME HAS OCCURRED.**

BUT THIS ...?

NOBODY BELIEVES THAT'S GOING TO DO ANYTHING ANYWAY.

FORGET ABOUT THAT WHOLE **SPIEL** ABOUT TERMINATING THE LAND LEASE FOR THE BLIND AND EVICTING EVERYONE...

GOTOH-SAN?

I'M SO SORRY, BUT WE REALLY DO HAVE TO TURN IT OFF WHILE WE'RE GONE.

KLIK

HERE, LET ME TURN ON THE LIGHT.

I'M SORRY I TOOK SO LONG, RYOTARO WAS BEING FUSSY.

HM-HM!

HMM~!

HM-HM-HM!

OH!

MY HUSBAND WILL BE HOME SOON WITH DINNER FOR ALL OF YOU. WHY DON'T YOU STAY IN HERE AND WATCH SOME TV UNTIL HE ARRIVES?

DID ANYBODY COME BY WHILE I WAS OUT?

IT'S A *POLITICAL TACTIC* HE USES TO VOICE ALL THE HIDDEN FEARS AND PREJUDICES OF THE MIDDLE-AGED AND ELDERLY. IT HAS WON HIM A LOT OF VOTES IN THE PAST.

IT'S NEVER BEEN UNUSUAL TO HEAR HIM MAKE RACIST AND CLASSIST REMARKS, BUT THAT'S ALL AN ACT ON HIS PART.

THE MAYOR HAS ALWAYS BEEN A RIGHT-WING TRADITIONALIST.

BUT NOW HE IS PUBLICLY DECLARING THAT VAMPIRES HAVE *NO HUMAN RIGHTS!* HE'S GIVEN TACIT PERMISSION TO *KILL THEM!!*

DO YOU HAVE ANY **IDEA** WHAT THAT MEANS?!

IT'S OKAY. YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY...

WE'LL DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO PROTECT YOU.

YOU'LL BE JUST FINE...

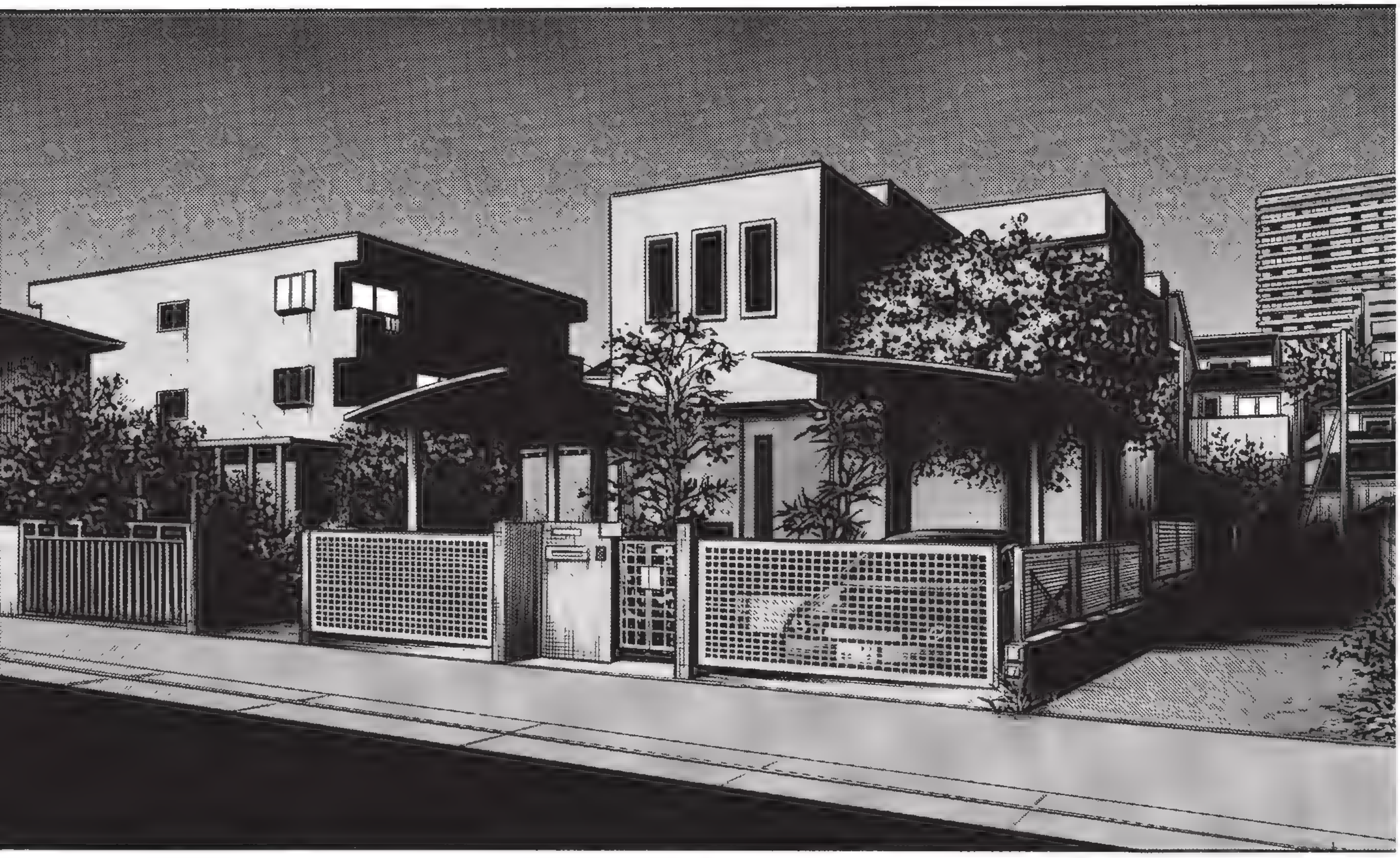
KIMURA-SAN.

IT JUST BECAME TACITLY LEGALIZED *MURDER!*

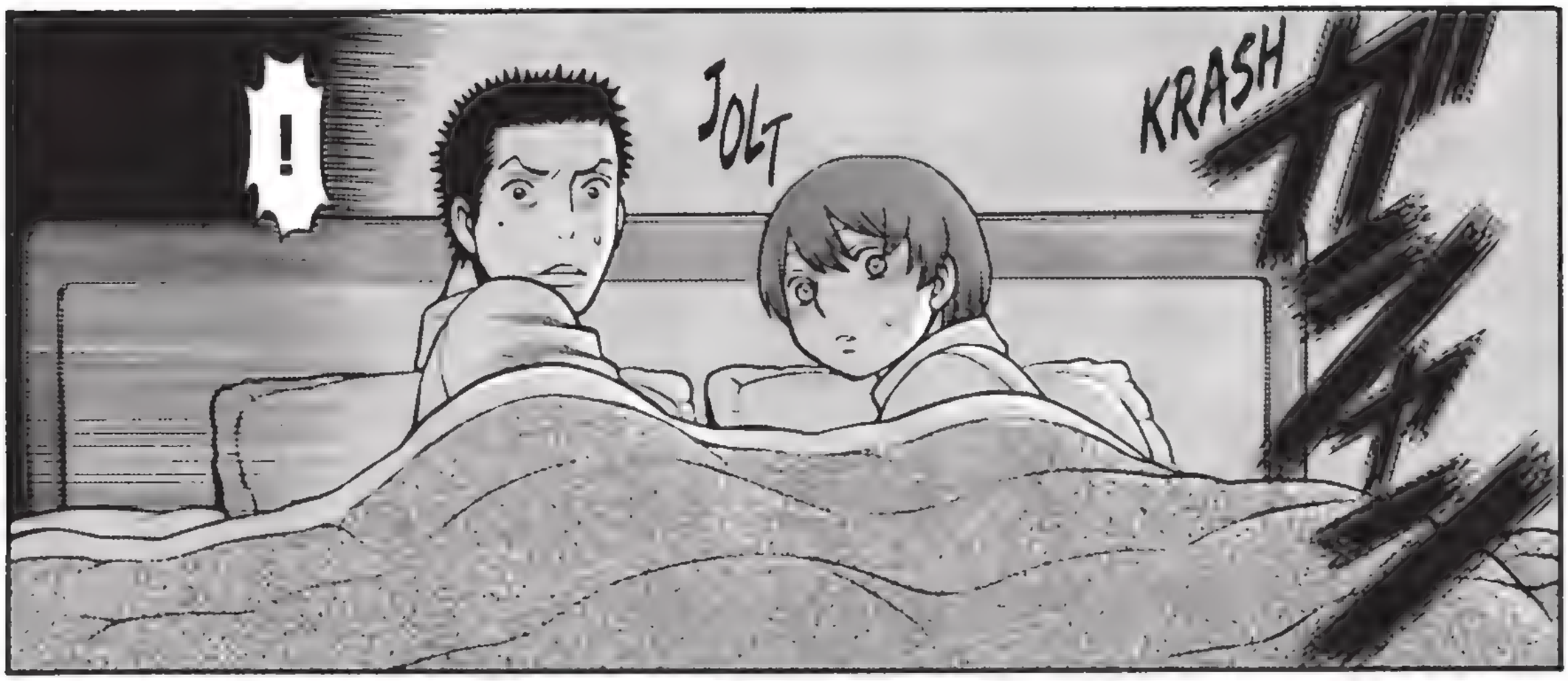
UNBE-LIEVABLE!

THIS IS GOING TO END IN DISASTER!

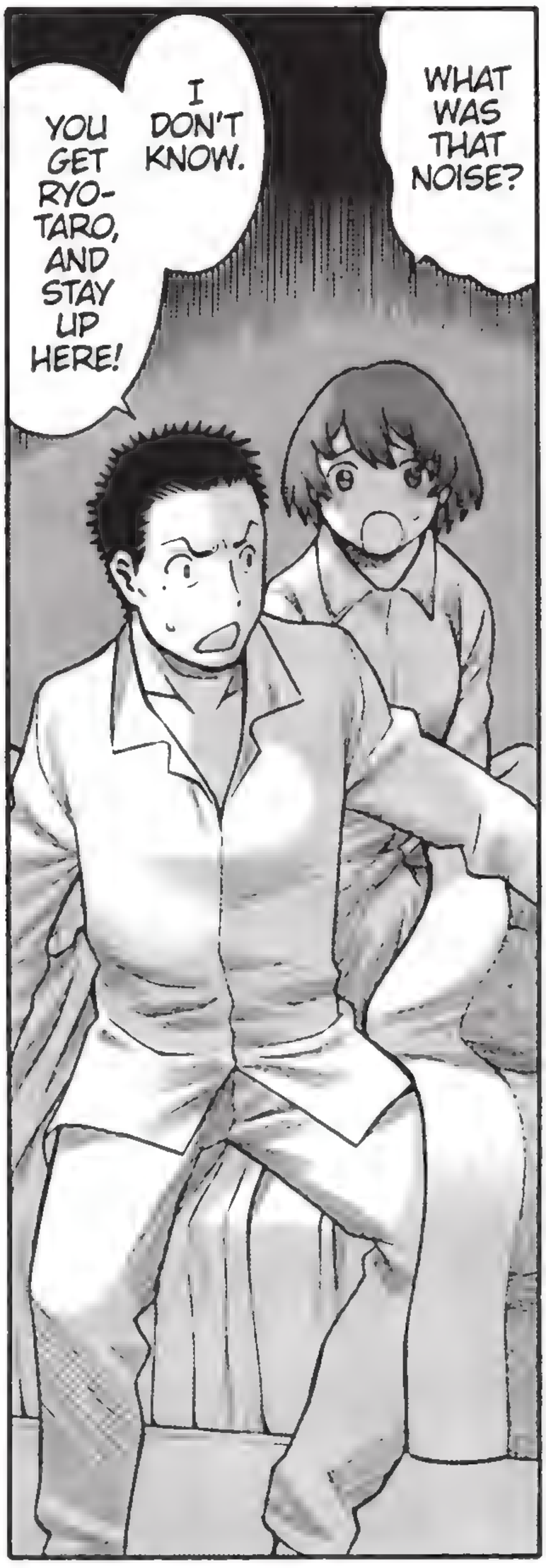
Chapter 74: Ordinary People

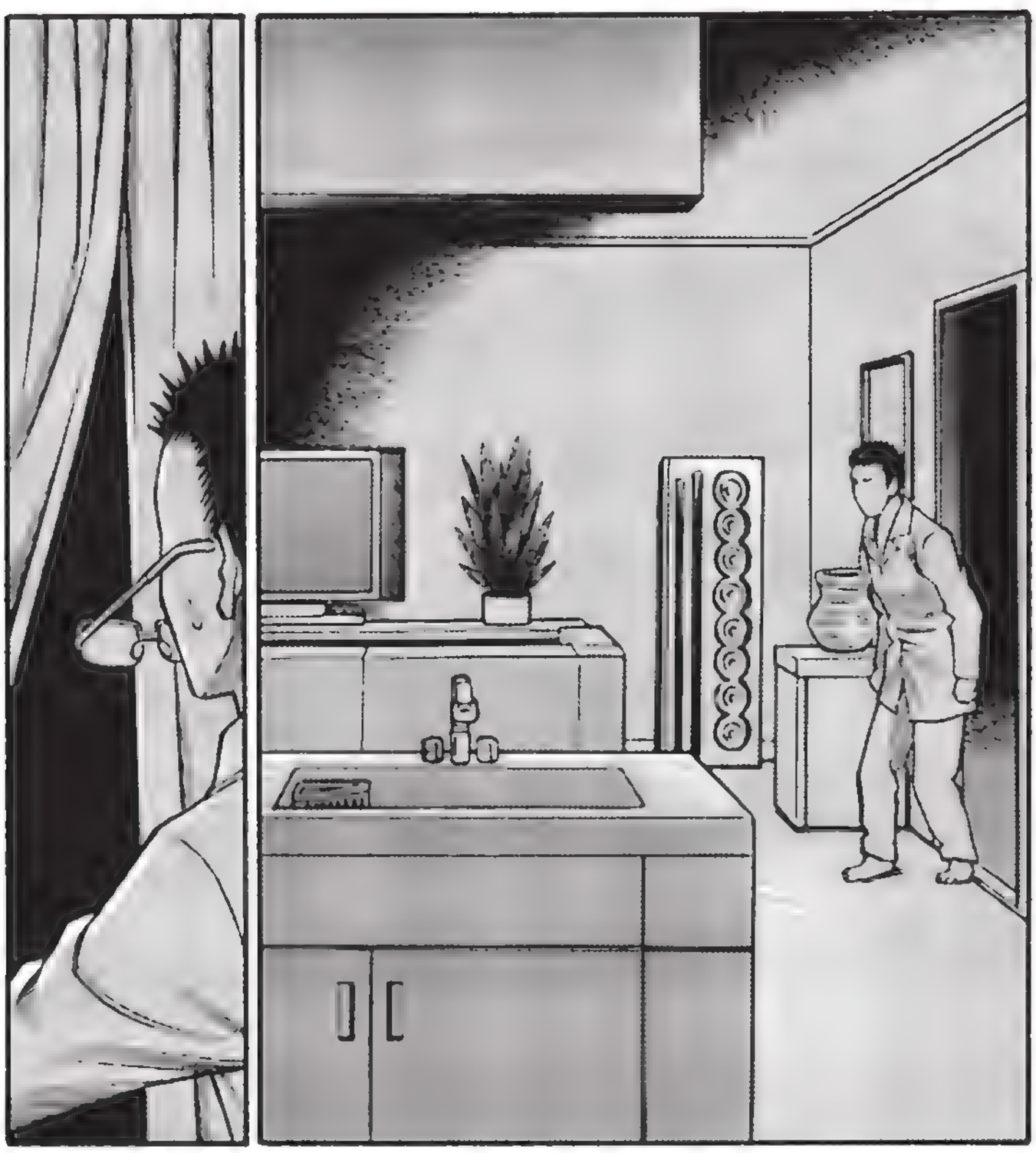


~ONE WEEK AGO~


!
JOLT
KRASH


STAY THERE! DON'T LEAVE THE ROOM!
TAKA-FUMI-KUN!


WHAT WAS THAT NOISE?
I DON'T KNOW.
YOU GET RYO-TARO, AND STAY UP HERE!



I TOLD YOU TO STAY IN OUR ROOM!

CHIEMI!

TAKA-FUMI-KUN!

WHAT? FROM THE KIMURAS ?!

IT'S NOT US, THOUGH. IT CAME FROM NEXT DOOR.

HUH?!

KRASH

KRASH

KRASH

SLAM

SMASH

THUMP

WHAT'S GOING ON OVER THERE?

WHAT'S THAT ...?

WHAM

KRUCH

HUH

.....

IT'S QUIET NOW.

BUT *WHAT?*

SOME-THING HAPPENED OVER THERE...

I WON'T.

YEAH, BUT I **WILL** COME HOME, NO MATTER WHAT, OKAY? ONCE IT GETS DARK, YOU LOCK THE DOORS AND WHATEVER YOU DO, **DON'T LEAVE THE HOUSE.**

OKAY.

YEAH, I KNOW.

OH? SO YOU'RE GOING TO BE HOME LATE TONIGHT?

WHAT? DID YOU HEAR SOME-THING OVER THERE AGAIN?!

UM...

TAKAFUMI? ABOUT THE KIMURAS...

BUT--

THAT WAS STILL A **STUPID** IDEA! ALL WE KNOW NOW IS THAT SOME-THING BAD HAPPENED TO THEM FOR SURE!!

DO YOU HAVE **ANY IDEA** HOW DANGER-OUS THAT WAS?!

WHAT?! HOW COULD YOU DO THAT?!

TAKAFUMI, *LISTEN* TO ME! WHEN I RANG THE BELL, I HEARD **NOISES** INSIDE. THEY'RE STILL IN THERE!

NO. BUT IT'S BEEN THREE DAYS, RIGHT?

I THOUGHT ABOUT IT REALLY HARD, AND I DECIDED TO GO AND RING THEIR DOORBELL. SO, I DID IT.

VEEEE

SIIIGH ...

DON'T STICK YOUR NOSE INTO THEIR BUSI-NESS!

I DON'T WANT YOU PUTTING YOURSELF OR RYOTARO IN ANY DANGER, UNDER-STAND? SO LEAVE THEM BE!

OKAY ...

HARUKA-CHAN...

TMP

TMP

THAT'S HARUKA-CHAN! AND SHE'S CRYING!

BOO HOO ...

BOO HOO HOO.

KCHIK

LIM...

I...I'M COMING IN, OKAY?

KIMU-RA-SAN ...?

KRUNCH

!

TINK

WSH

HA-RUKA-CHAN!

OH, THANK GOOD-NESS!

YEEP!!

K-KIMU RA-SA...

ARE YOU OKAY?

AAAH!

AAAAAAAGH!!

KYAAAAAA

I BEG YOU, PLEASE!

HAVE MERCY!

AT...AT LEAST, PRETEND YOU NEVER SAW THIS...

I-IF ANYONE EVER FINDS OUT...

IF THEY FIGURE OUT WHAT'S HAP-PENED...

PLEASE ...

I BEG YOU!

AND... AND PLEASE, DON'T TELL ANYONE!

IT'S OKAY ...

IT'S OKAY, I PROMISE.

UM...

KIMU-RA-SAN?

PRESENT DAY.

THE CITY COUNCIL'S TERMINATION OF THE BUND'S LEASE AND THE DEMAND FOR THEIR EVICTION IS **POSTURING**, NOTHING MORE.

THERE IS SIMPLY *NO WAY* FOR THEM TO CREATE ANY EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO ENFORCE THAT DECISION.

House of Representatives, 1st Office Building

PERHAPS, BUT THIS IS STILL NOT A SITUATION THE GOVERNMENT CAN **AFFORD** TO OVERLOOK!

LEFT UNCHECKED, IT COULD EASILY SPIRAL OUT OF HAND. THERE WILL BE *BLOOD-SHED!!*

BLOOD-SHED, EH?

FORGET ABOUT THAT BLOWHARD OF A MAYOR.

HE IS A PUFFED-UP PARROT, WHOSE ONLY **SKILL** IS SINGING THE WORDS THAT PEOPLE SO *DESPERATELY* WANT TO HEAR.

BUT **WHOSE** BLOOD IS IT THAT WILL BE SHED?

THE VAMPIRES? OR PERHAPS THE HUMANS?

WELL ...

REIKO.

YES! THAT IS WHY WE MUST--

WE ARE *MEDIA-TORS.*

DO NOT FORGET, REIKO.

WE MUST NEVER LET THAT SCALE *TIP,* REIKO.

OUR DUTY IS TO HOLD NIGHT AND DAY ON AN EVEN KEEL.

A *SCALE* WHICH BALANCES THE HUMANE TO THE INHU-MANE.

MEDIATORS ARE A "BALANCE."

ATTEMPTING TO ASSERT ANY **CONTROL** OVER THIS WORLD UNDER THE TRITE AND HACKNEYED BANNER OF "JUSTICE" IS ENTIRELY *OUT OF THE QUESTION.*

IT IS NOT FOR US TO TAKE SIDES. WE DO NOT WORK FOR THE BENEFIT OF ONE OVER THE OTHER.

.....

ONE DAY, YOU WILL INHERIT THIS DUTY.

YOU *MUST* UNDER-STAND AND ACCEPT ALL THAT IT ENTAILS.

PASSED DOWN IN OUR FAMILY FOR **CENTURIES,** IT HAS NO ROOM FOR "MERCY" OR "COMPAS-SION."

OURS IS A DIFFICULT DUTY, REIKO...

I APPRECIATE YOU SHARING YOUR VALUABLE TIME. I WILL NOT TAKE UP ANY MORE OF IT.

PLEASE EXCUSE ME...

A QUES-TION, GRAND-FATHER.

IS IT CORRECT OF ME TO ASSUME THAT THIS... SITUATION IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THAT DUTY?

BTAM

THAT ONE RESEM-BLES HER FATHER ENTIRELY *TOO MUCH.*

HMPH.

THAT IT IS THE *DELIB-ERATE* RESULT OF LONG PLANN-ING...

ALL WITH AN EYE TOWARDS MAINTAIN-ING THAT "BALANCE" ?

TICKETS

BEEP

COULD WE ASK YOU TO SHOW US YOUR NECK?

EXCUSE ME, SIR?

H-HUH? BUT IT'S STILL LIGHT OUT...

VAMPIRES AREN'T OUT AT THIS HOUR.

Y'KNOW, YOU SURE KNOW AN **AWFUL LOT** ABOUT THOSE BLOOD-SUCKERS.

YOU MEAN "SHADE GEL"?

THEY'VE GOT THAT **CREAM** STUFF THAT LETS THEM WALK AROUND IN SUN-LIGHT.

THAT STUFF ONLY LASTS FIFTEEN MINUTES.

LET ME SEE WHAT YOU'VE GOT IN THAT **BAG** OF YOURS.

YES, WE'RE NEIGH-BORS.

HEY, YOU KNOW HIM?

TSUCHIDA-SAN, PERFECT TIMING! PLEASE TELL THESE GUYS I'M NO VAMPIRE!

TSU-CHIDA-SAN!

WATA-NABE-SAN?

IF THERE'S NOTHING SUSPICIOUS IN THERE, WHERE'S THE PROBLEM IN LETTING US TAKE A LOOK?

WHAT? WHY ?!

IT'S ***MY*** BAG! YOU GUYS DON'T HAVE ANY RIGHT TO--

I'VE ALWAYS LIKED WATCHES.

BUT I'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO AFFORD A NICE ONE, Y'KNOW.

O-OH...

WHAT A NICE **WATCH** YOU HAVE...

A FRANK MUELLER DOUBLE-FACE, RIGHT?

.....

I HAVE TO HURRY HOME. I PROMISED MY WIFE I'D BE BACK BY 5:30.

YOU KNOW HOW MUCH SHE WOR-RIES.

HARD YAMMER

ESPECIALLY THAT ONE JOB YOU DID. YOU KNOW, THAT BIG ONE FOR THE *SPECIAL DISTRICT.*

BUT YOU'VE NEVER HAD THAT PROBLEM, HAVE YOU? YOU MAKE QUITE A BIT OF **MONEY** FOR SOMEONE SO YOUNG.

WHY ARE YOU **HESITATING** TO SHOW US?

IF THERE ISN'T ANYTHING *SUSPICIOUS* IN THERE...

TSU-CHIDA-SAN ...?

WATA-NABE-SAN.

WATA-NABE-SAN...

LET US SEE.

WHAT DO YOU WANT ?!

WELL, ISN'T THAT SOME GREET-ING!

FOR THE UMPTEENTH TIME, YOU HAVE *NO AUTHORITY* TO SEARCH **ANYBODY.**

AND YOU **SURE** DON'T HAVE ANY RIGHT TO OPEN UP OTHER PEOPLES' BAGS AND **CONFISCATE** ANYTHING INSIDE OF THEM. HOW MANY TIMES AM I GOING TO HAVE TO TELL YOU THIS?

ARE YOU LOT AT IT *AGAIN?*

HEY, HEY, HEY!

WELL, *SOME-BODY'S* GOTTA DO IT, BECAUSE YOU LAZY BUMS WON'T DO YOUR *JOB!!*

OH, I *AM* DOING MY JOB. MORE THAN YOU WILL **EVER** UNDER-STAND.

YOU THERE.

……

YOU CAN LEAVE. TAKE CARE NOW.

UGH, GOD! IT'S A FREAKIN' ZOO OUT THERE!!

HOW DID IT GO?

IT WAS ALL SO DARN **NORMAL**, IT WAS ALMOST A LETDOWN. I FELT STUPID FOR BOTHER-ING TO WEAR A DISGUISE.

I WENT TO THE **PARK** I FOUND ON THE INTERNET, THE ONE WHERE DEALERS ARE SUPPOSED TO HANG OUT.

SOME OLD GUY WAS THERE... WHEN I GAVE HIM THE MONEY, HE HANDED ME A KEY TO A TRAIN STATION LOCKER.

ERM...

NOT REALLY. THAT WAS THE *EASIEST* PART, ACTUALLY.

OH, THANK GOODNESS! THESE MUST HAVE BEEN SO HARD FOR YOU TO GET.

OH, IT'S OKAY. ANYWAY, I'M SURE YOU MUST BE THIRSTY!

HERE, LET ME PUT THESE IN SOME **GLASSES** FOR YOU.

THANK YOU. REALLY.

YOU'RE PUTTING YOUR-SELVES IN A LOT OF **DANGER** FOR US. WE APPRE-CIATE IT VERY MUCH.

RYO-TARO~~~!

PAPA'S HOME!

TAKA-FUMI-KUN, WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT HAP-PENED?!

WHAM

DAHAGH!

WAAA

THEY HAVE TO LEAVE!

CHIEMI, I JUST CAN'T DO THIS!

I CAN'T KEEP HIDING THESE... THESE *MONSTERS* IN MY HOME!!

TMP TMP TMP

YES, IT *IS!!*

THAT'S NOT--!

CHIEMI, LOOK. I KNOW YOU WANT TO HELP THESE VAMPIRES BECAUSE YOU'RE FRIENDS WITH PRINCESS MINA, BUT...

I DON'T KNOW, AND I DON'T CARE! MAYBE THEY CAN GO FIND SOME OF THEIR MONSTER FRIENDS, SOMEWHERE FAR FROM HERE!

BUT WHERE WOULD THEY GO? THEY'RE OUR *NEIGHBORS!*

THEN WHAT IS IT?! TELL ME!!

OKAY, THAT'S PART OF IT!

BUT THAT'S NOT *ALL* OF IT!!

TAKAFUMI, DON'T SAY THAT! THEY MIGHT BE LISTENING!

CHIEMI ...

I JUST CAN'T!

SO I CAN'T PRETEND IT'S SOMEONE ELSE'S PROBLEM.

!

THOSE VAMPIRES ATTACKED THE KIMURAS' HOUSE ON A *WHIM!*

IF THAT WHIM HAD CARRIED THEM JUST *ONE* MORE DOOR OVER, IT COULD HAVE BEEN *US* THAT GOT TURNED INTO VAMPIRES!

BECAUSE IT COULD HAVE BEEN *US!!*

KIMU-RA-SAN!

!

SO WE'RE GOING TO DO THE SAME THING... THAT WAY, PEOPLE WILL FINALLY UNDER-STAND.

I HEARD THERE WERE SOME VAMPIRES WHO *PULLED THEIR OWN FANGS OUT,* TO PROVE TO OTHERS THEY WOULDN'T ATTACK HUMANS.

WE DON'T HAVE ANY OTHER CHOICE ...

DADDY ...

I'M SORRY, HARUKA. I DON'T WANT TO DO THIS TO YOU.

KIMU-RA-SAN...

WE DON'T WANT TO HURT ANYBODY... WE **NEVER** WANTED TO HURT ANYBODY.

NONE OF US HAVE *ANY* CHOICE!

BUT I *HAVE* TO.

PLEASE!

PLEASE UNDER-STAND THAT.

AAAAAAAAGGH!!!

AAAAAAAAAH!!

YANK

YANK

I DIDN'T HAVE A CHOICE... THE **DEADLINE** WAS TODAY. THERE WAS NO WAY I COULD SLIP OUT EARLY.

I'M ON MY WAY HOME, RIGHT NOW.

YES.

YES.

I COULDN'T GET A TAXI FOR SUCH A SHORT TRIP...

A TAXI?

.....

NORIKO, WHAT'S WRONG?

NO-RIKO?!

BWAH!

HELP!

HEELP!

EEEEEKKKK!!!

WHAT A DUMB BROAD!

I BET SHE PISSED HER-SELF!!

AHA HA HA! DID YOU SEE THAT?! SHE *TOTALLY* FREAKED!

BLAH!!

TMP TMP

OOO! HERE COMES SOME-BODY ELSE.

GREAT! LEMME DO IT THIS TIME. IT'S MY TURN!

BASH

AAAAH!!

TWITCH

TWITCH

TWITCH

AAARGH!!

THERE'S ANOTHER ONE! GET IT!!

WAIT!! NO!!

YOU'VE GOT IT ALL WRONG!!

PLEASE!!

AH! NOOO! STOP!!

SEE?! I'M NOT!! I SWEAR I'M NOT!!

I'M NOT A VAMP-IRE!!

IS IT DONE? IS IT DONE?

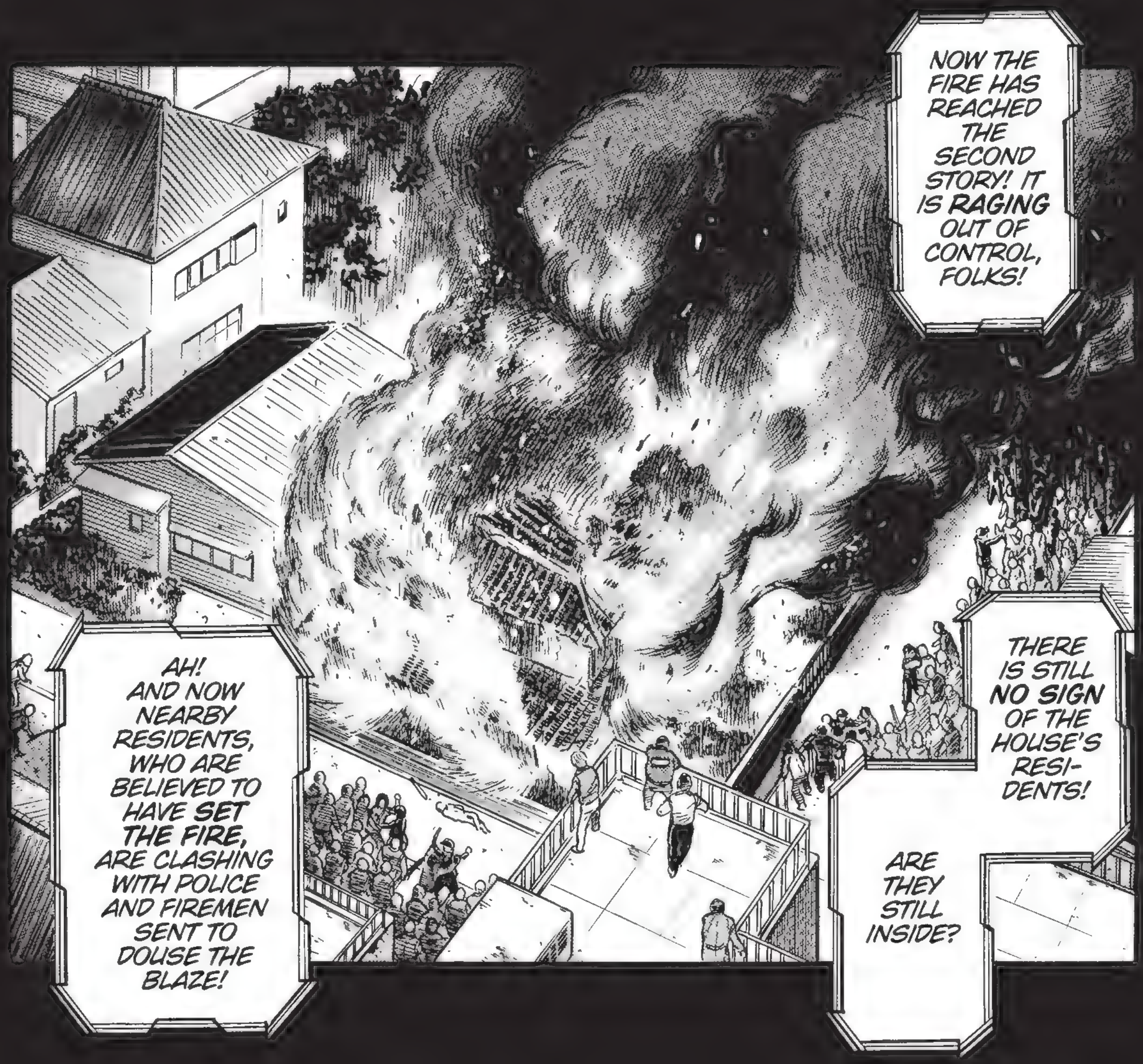
LOOK! LOOK! THE POT IS BOILING!

CRUNCH, CRUNCH, CRUNCH!

LET'S TASTE AND SEE!

OOH! IT'S *DONE!*

Chapter 75: Abyss



LOOK OUT! STAND BACK!

OH NO! THE SECOND FLOOR HAS JUST COL-LAPSED!

OTADA-SAN! IS IT TRUE THAT THE RESIDENTS OF THIS HOUSE WERE **VAMPIRES?**

THAT INFORMATION HAS NOT YET BEEN CONFIRMED. HOWEVER, IT HAS BEEN **RUMORED** IN THIS AREA FOR SOME TIME.

THIS IS UNBE-LIEV-ABLE!

WHAT THE HELL ...?

WHAT WAS THAT?

KRASH!

OH MY GOOD-NESS!

THOSE PEOPLE ARE IN *OUR HOUSE!* WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

DAR-LING?

WHAT ARE THOSE PEOPLE *DOING* TO OUR HOUSE?!

GET BACK FROM THE WIN-DOW!

!

BING-BONG

BING-BONG

BING-BONG

BING-BONG

YES ...

THEY HAVE.

THIS IS BAD, KIMURA-SAN...

IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE FOUND OUT YOU WERE ATTACKED BY VAMPIRES.

YES ...?

CHIEMI!

UM...

I-I'LL GO. TAKAFUMI-KUN, COULD YOU HIDE THE KIMURAS, PLEASE?

NUMAI-SAN?

WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

OH!

M-MY! IT REALLY IS A LOVELY DAY OUT TODAY, ISN'T IT?

II'M *SURE* THEY'RE STILL LURKING ABOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD, LOOKING FOR MORE INNOCENT PEOPLE TO ATTACK!

THAT MEANS ***THEY*** MUST HAVE BEEN TURNED INTO THOSE MONSTERS, TOO!

THEY WERE ATTACKED BY **VAMPIRES,** AFTER ALL! THEIR HOUSE IS **EMPTY!** NO ONE HAS LIVED THERE FOR *DAYS!!*

WATANABE-SAN, IT'S TERRIBLE! IT'S ***AWFUL!***

YOUR NEIGHBORS!

!

THANK GOODNESS I REMEMBERED TO PUT THE KIMURAS' SHOES AWAY!

I'VE BEEN SO *WORRIED!*

IT WOULD BE TERRIBLE IF SOMETHING WERE TO HAPPEN TO YOU...

PEEK

PEEK

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

YOU *ARE* THEIR NEIGHBORS, AFTER ALL.

HARUKA-CHAN, YOUR SOCK!

WHAT HAP-PENED TO IT?

I TOOK IT OFF WHEN I WAS PLAYING WITH RYO-CHAN.

IT WAS TOO HOT.

IF SHE SEES A GIRL'S SOCK ON OUR FRONT PORCH ...!!

OH NO!

ER...

I-IT'S OKAY. I DON'T MIND... BABIES WILL DO THAT.

OH MY GOOD-NESS, I'M SO SORRY!

GREAT MOVE, RYO-CHAN!

BAAA ~!

RYO-CHAN!

OUCH!

SEE YOU!

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR CONCERN!!

IF THERE'S ANYTHING WE CAN DO TO HELP-- ANY-THING AT ALL-- DON'T HESITATE TO ASK.

SQUEEZE

SINCE IT HAP-PENED SO CLOSE TO US, WE CAN'T JUST SIT BACK AND WATCH!

GOOD MORNING, NUMAI-SAN.

SEEMS LIKE SOMETHING **SERIOUS** HAS HAPPENED TO OUR NEIGHBORS OVER THERE!

WHEW.

WHAM

KRUNCH

WHUMP

KRASH

IT ALL FEELS SO *UNREAL* ...

I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE THIS IS ACTUALLY HAPPEN-ING.

ANYONE CAUGHT DISOBEYING THIS OR ANY OTHER ORDER WILL BE SUBJECT TO **SEVERE** PUNISHMENT.

TODAY, ONLY SUBJECTS WITH ID NUMBERS ENDING IN "13" THROUGH "54" ARE PERMITTED TO LEAVE THEIR HOMES.

COMPLETE OBEDIENCE IS THE WILL OF HER MAJESTY THE PRINCESS. THE WILL OF HER MAJESTY IS THE WILL OF THE KINGDOM.

HER MAJESTY THE PRINCESS DOES NOT REQUIRE MUCH OF HER BELOVED SUBJECTS.

LET US ALL DEMON-STRATE OUR **LOYALTY** TO HER MAJESTY THE PRINCESS TODAY.

ALL HER MAJESTY ASKS OF YOU IS YOUR UNCONDI-TIONAL OBEDIENCE.

LIGHT THE FIRE CALLED "SUSPICION" UNDER HUMANITY, AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS?

IN WHAT SEEMED LIKE *MERE MINUTES*, THEY ARE **RIOTING.**

SUCH A SHORT TIME, AND THEIR WHOLE SOCIETY HAS BECOME LIKE A **POT** ON THE VERGE OF BOILING OVER.

YOU SEEM LIKE YOU WANT TO SAY SOME-THING, YUKI.

YUUHI.

BRING IT TO HER.

Is this what y_

TK TK TK TK

IS *THAT* WHAT YOU THINK?

HONESTLY, IT GRIEVES ME HOW CHEAP AND **PETTY** YOU BELIEVE ME TO BE.

Is this what you wanted to do?

TK TK TK

Then why did you come here?

TK TK TK TK

WHY WAS IT THAT *MINA* CAME HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE?

WHY DID I COME HERE ...?

LET ME ANSWER THAT WITH A **QUESTION** OF MY OWN.

GEOGRAPHY. THE NATIVE PEOPLE. CULTURE. POLITICS.

I'M SURE YOU COULD INVENT MANY PLAUSIBLE "REASONS," BUT TO ME, **ALL OF THEM** FALL SHORT.

TO BUILD THE BUND, YOU SAY?

WELL, WHY BUILD IT *HERE*? WHY THIS COUNTRY? WHY COULDN'T IT BE ELSEWHERE?

"IT IS HERE."

WHAT IF THERE IS MEANING IN THAT, IN AND OF ITSELF?

OR MAYBE ...

THERE IS SOME MEANING THAT PRINCESS MINA HERSELF HAS YET TO CONSCIOUSLY REALIZE.

.....

!

THOUGH THEY MUST PART...

THE JOURNEY NEED NOT BE RUSHED.

HE WHO WANDERS AND HE WHO REMAINS...

YOU *ARE*, AFTER ALL, RATHER CLEVER WITH THOSE SORTS OF RIDDLES.

PERHAPS I JUST GAVE YOU TOO BIG OF A **HINT.**

WHOOPS! DID I SAY THAT ALOUD?

EVEN *I* CANNOT HELP BUT BE A LITTLE SOFT ON YOU.

IT'S STRANGE...

PSHH

PSHH

AHA HA...

AH HA HA HA HA!

WHY DID YOU CALL ME HERE? HAS THE FAKE PRINCESS FINALLY DECIDED TO PUNISH ME FOR MY "DISOBEDI-ENCE" BACK THEN?

SURE, WHATEVER. CAN WE GET TO **BUSINESS** NOW?

IT WILL HAVE BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS, I'M SURE.

THERE. SEE HOW GREEN AND VIBRANT IT IS?

I DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT BLOOD-LINES, UNLIKE YOU NOBLE TYPES.

I'M NOT GONNA DITCH ONE "PRINCESS" FOR ANOTHER OVER SOME DUMB **TRIVIALITY** LIKE THAT.

LIKE I CARE. I'VE ONLY BEEN A TEPES SUBJECT FOR A FEW MONTHS NOW, Y'KNOW.

TO ME, THE PRINCESS MINA WHO SAVED ME AND RULI IS THE *ONLY* PRINCESS MINA.

THE "FAKE" PRIN-CESS, HM?

THAT ALONE IS ENOUGH TO CHARGE YOU WITH *LESE MAJESTE**.

*Lese majeste is the crime of violating the dignity of a reigning sovereign in an absolute monarchy. Essentially, the crime of treason.

MY LOYALTY TO HOUSE TEPES HAS LASTED FOR OVER 200 YEARS. I DO NOT LIKE TO HEAR IT SPOKEN OF SO LIGHTLY.

JUST SAY THINGS STRAIGHT! *DO* THINGS STRAIGHT!!

FORGET ABOUT HOWEVER LONG IT'S BEEN! FORGET ABOUT THE STUPID LAWS AND RULES, AND ETIQUETTE AND STUFF!!

NO, MAN! OTHER WAY AROUND!

I'M SAYING 200 YEARS IS WAY *TOO* LONG FOR ANYONE TO BEAR!

TELL ME. STRAIGHT OUT, NO BULLSHIT.

WHAT DO YOU *REALLY* THINK ABOUT ALL THIS?

!

I'M GOING TO SEND YOU OFF THE ISLAND.

LET US GET DOWN TO BUSI-NESS.

TINK

WHAT FOR?

WHAT, YOU *WANT* ME TO LEAVE THE BUND?

I WILL TELL YOU **WHAT** AT A LATER TIME.

TO **LOOK** FOR SOME-THING.

YOU MEAN *YOUR* PRINCESS, RIGHT?

UH-HUH.

THIS MISSION IS THE **WILL** OF THE PRINCESS.

GO CARE-FULLY.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH THEM?!

YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO PICK AND CHOOSE.

AFTER ALL, THIS MISSION WILL HAVE A GREAT EFFECT ON THE FATE OF THE FANGLESS.

HOW-EVER ...

HALF OF THEM ARE NO LONGER HERE.

THEY LIVE.

YOU BETTER NOT TELL ME THEY'RE--!

EVER SINCE THE ESCAPE, THE WHOLE FANGLESS DISTRICT HAS BEEN SEALED OFF!

I HAVEN'T SEEN ANY OF THEM AROUND THE BLIND IN WEEKS!

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM...

THEN STOP QUIBBLING AND DO YOUR DUTY.

WHA ?!

THEY ARE NOT ON THE ISLAND.

THEY ARE, LIKE YOU WILL SOON BE, WORKING ON A MISSION FOR ME, AWAY FROM THE BLIND.

.....

.....

I KNOW THIS IS DUMB...

BUT FOR SOME REASON, I *STILL* TRUST YOU.

.....

GOD, I *KNOW* I GOTTA QUIT BEING STUPID, BUT I KEEP DOING STUFF LIKE THIS, OVER AND OVER.

SIXTEEN RESIDENTIAL HOMES HAVE BEEN **DESTROYED** BY EITHER SPONTANEOUS MOBS OF CITIZENS, GONE CRAZY FROM FEAR, OR BY ORGANIZED NEIGHBORING RESIDENTS.

THERE HAVE BEEN **THIRTY-FOUR** REPORTED CASUAL-TIES.

SPONTANEOUS "VAMPIRE HUNTS" BY CITIZENS HAVE NOW BEEN REPORTED ACROSS THE ENTIRE GREATER METROPOLITAN AREA.

WE HAVE *NO WAY OF* KNOWING HOW MANY OTHER INCIDENTS HAVE NOT YET COME TO LIGHT.

HOWEVER, THESE NUMBERS REPRESENT ONLY THOSE INCIDENTS THAT HAVE BEEN *OFFICIALLY* REPORTED.

第二十三回 対吸血鬼特別治安対策連絡会議

23rd Government Multi-Departmental Anti-Vampire Special Planning Committee Meeting

GOD! THEN THOSE WERE ALL JUST PLAIN *LYNCHINGS!*

YOU'RE KIDDING ME!

WHY HASN'T ANY OF THIS BEEN REPORTED TO THE PUBLIC YET?!

.....

SO HOW MANY OF THOSE "HUNTED" WERE CON-FIRMED VAMPIRES?

THEY MIGHT EVEN START LABELING THIS AS **RWANDA,** COME AGAIN!

WE HAVE NO CHOICE. IF WORD WERE TO GO PUBLIC THAT PEOPLE ARE ***MURDERING*** THEIR OWN NEIGHBORS IN COLD BLOOD, IT WOULD BE A *DISASTER!*

IT WOULD LOOK BAD NOT ONLY TO THE REST OF THE NATION, BUT TO THE ENTIRE WORLD!

IN REGARDS TO THAT, WE HAVE ASKED FOR THE COOPERATION OF ALL NEWS MEDIA OUTLETS IN--

WHAT?!

I WILL GO ON RECORD AS SAYING NONE OF THIS WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE *POLICE* BUNGLING THINGS.

AND JUST SO WE KEEP THINGS STRAIGHT...

THAT WAS *STUPID!* YOU KNOW THERE'S GOING TO BE A BACK-LASH!

A MEDIA BLACK-OUT, *AGAIN?!* YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!

OUR OPERATION INVOLVES *THOROUGH INVESTIGATION* AT EVERY STEP!

AS OF RIGHT NOW, ALL TARGETS WE HAVE ELIMINATED WERE *CONFIRMED VAMPIRES!*

EX-CUSE ME?!

THAT *RIDICULOUSLY* HEAVY-HANDED AND VIOLENT "EXTERMINATION PLAN" OF YOURS CONTRIBUTED TO THIS!

PEOPLE SEE THE BLOODY WORK YOU DO, AND DECIDE **THEY** CAN DO IT TOO! AND WHO CAN BLAME THEM?

THERE YOU GO AGAIN... THE POLICE HAVE ALWAYS HAD THE HABIT OF FLYING OFF THE HANDLE WHENEVER THEY THINK THEIR PRECIOUS "BROTHERHOOD" IS THREATENED.

AND I WILL HAVE YOU KNOW THAT OUR OFFICERS AND FIRE-FIGHTERS, ACROSS THIS **ENTIRE** CITY, HAVE BEEN WORKING TIRELESSLY TO **SAVE** THE VICTIMS OF THOSE ATROCITIES, EVER SINCE THE VERY FIRST ATTACK! YOU HAVE *NO IDEA* HOW MANY OF THEM HAVE FALLEN VICTIM THEMSELVES!

WE KNOW BETTER THAN *ANY OF YOU* HOW DANGEROUS THESE CREATURES ARE!

SAY WHAT-EVER YOU WANT, IT CHANGES *NO-THING!*

I WILL NOT SIT HERE AND LISTEN TO ALL OF *YOU*-- YOU WHO'VE SAT AROUND *WATCHING* THE ENTIRE TIME-- BELITTLING THEIR EFFORTS!!

THIS IS A DILEMMA WE *ALL* FACE. WE MUST TEAR DOWN THE WALLS THAT HAVE DIVIDED OUR VARIOUS EFFORTS AND WORK TOGETHER AS A **WHOLE** TO COME UP WITH A SOLUTION!

EVERY-ONE, *PLEASE!*

WHILE WE SIT HERE AND ARGUE, INNOCENT PEOPLE IN THE CITY ARE LOSING THEIR LIVES.

.....

IT WAS THE JOB OF THE SPECIAL DISTRICT'S LIAISON OFFICE TO PUT A COLLAR ON THOSE BEASTS AND MAKE SURE THEY BEHAVED THEM-SELVES AROUND US DECENT FOLK, WAS IT NOT?!

WHEN YOU GET RIGHT DOWN TO IT, IT IS AN **INDISPUTABLE FACT** THAT *YOUR* INCOMPE-TENCE IS WHAT CAUSED THIS SITUATION TO SPIRAL OUT OF CONTROL!

WELL THEN, MISS "LIAISON" ...

DO YOU HAVE ANY CONCRETE IDEAS FOR A **VIABLE PLAN** TO DEAL WITH THIS "DILEMMA"?

THERE SHOULD HAVE BEEN *MUCH* MORE SERIOUS DISCUSSION ABOUT THE **DANGERS** OF LETTING THOSE MONSTERS LIVE NEAR US WHEN THEY FIRST CAME HERE!

THAT MEANS THIS WHOLE **CATASTROPHE** MUST HAVE BEEN *THEIR* PLAN FROM THE START!

WHAT OF PRINCESS MINA? WHAT OF THE BUND GOVERN-MENT? THEY'RE ALL STANDING BACK AND **WATCHING!!**

BUT **LOOK** AT WHAT'S HAPPENING! THEY'RE SITTING AROUND, TWIDDLING THEIR THUMBS!

BUT YOU WILL GET NO SUCH PREFER-ENTIAL TREAT-MENT HERE!

A-ANY-WAY!

YOU, YOUNG LADY, MAY HAVE GOTTEN THE ROYAL TREATMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THANKS TO YOUR GRANDFATHER'S REPUTATION...

THOSE ARE HARDLY THE WORDS I EXPECTED TO HEAR OUT OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH. WASN'T IT THANKS TO THE BUND'S LEASE THAT YOU GOT ALL THOSE **ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND AUXILIARY COMMISSIONS?**

OH REALLY, NOW.

BUT GIVEN THE CURRENT SITUATION, YOUR PRESENCE HERE IS NO LONGER NECESSARY!

YOU MAY HAVE HAD YOUR USES AS A MEDIATOR BETWEEN THE PRINCESS AND OUR GOVERN-MENT...

HOW MUCH **FUNDING** DID YOU MANAGE TO SIPHON OFF OF THAT, ANYWAY? I BET YOUR UPPER EXECS FOUND A LOT OF REALLY *POSH* "RETIREMENT" JOBS.

SO THE GOVERN-MENT HAS DECIDED TO TREAT THE MATTER AS A SOLELY INTERNAL AFFAIR, THEN.

WHATEVER OPPORTUNITY WE HAD TO BE INVOLVED IS NOW GONE.

THIS MEANS THE ENTIRE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS BEEN SHOVED TO THE SIDE-LINES IN THIS PARTICULAR NATIONAL ISSUE.

WE CAN BEGIN OPERATION AS SOON AS OUR REQUEST FOR FUNDING HAS BEEN APPROVED...

WHAT, *THAT* AGAIN?! YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME!

OUR MAIN PROB-LEM IS WHAT TO DO ***NOW.***

IF THINGS DEGENERATE MUCH FURTHER, THE GOVERNMENT MAY NEED TO MOVE THE CAPITAL **AWAY** FROM TOKYO.

OUR MINISTRY HAS BEEN GIVEN EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS TO SET UP AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO RESEARCH THE FEASIBILITY OF THAT PARTICULAR COURSE OF ACTION.

IT'S PROBABLY WISE TO CONSIDER MOVING IT, EVEN IF ONLY TEMPORARILY.

I KNOW A LOT OF MUNICIPALITIES WILL PROBABLY LOVE THAT.

WHEN WILL THAT BE UP AND RUNNING?

.....

THE LIAISON'S OFFICE WILL LIKELY BE DISSOLVED BEFORE TOO LONG.

GOTOH-KUN.

I SUGGEST YOU COLLECT YOUR THINGS.

YOU BEAR A HEAVY RESPON-SIBILITY FOR THIS.

I CAN'T BE-LIEVE THIS...!

TEK

SKSHH

GOD, WE ARE *DONE!*

FIN-ISHED!!

AT THIS RATE, *THE ENTIRE COUNTRY* IS GOING TO FALL APART!!

PEOPLE ARE *DYING* OUT THERE, AND ALL THEY CARE ABOUT IS POLITICS!

ARE THEIR TERRITORIAL *PISSING MATCHES* REALLY THAT IMPORTANT TO THEM?!

YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?

LEMME GIVE YOU SOME GOOD NEWS. SEE, WE JUST GOT A SHOT AT A COME-FROM-BEHIND, GRAND SLAM WIN.

WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?!

THERE ISN'T ANYTHING LEFT THAT WE *CAN* DO!!

HEY, NOW. THROWING IN THE TOWEL ALREADY?

THIS FIGHT'S JUST GETTIN' STARTED.

IT'S MINA-HIME.

SHE HAS... ESCAPED FROM ROZEN-MANN?!

.....

WHAT ?!

SMIRK

WHAT ...?

HER MAJESTY'S WHEREABOUTS ARE PRESENTLY UNKNOWN.

IT SEEMS BEOWULF ATTACKED ROZENMANN'S CASTLE, DESTROYING IT COMPLETELY.

I GOT A CALL FROM ONE OF MY BUDDIES IN THE CIA.

WHAT HAPPENED TO HER?

WHERE WAS SHE HEADED ?!

ONEE-CHAN!

PRIN-CESS MINA...

FIND HER!

UN-KNOWN, YOUR MAJ-ESTY.

WHERE ARE YOU?

HOW-EVER...

THIS IS *HER* WE'RE TALKING ABOUT.

WHERE HAVE YOU GONE ...?

SEARCH THE **ENTIRE WORLD** WITH A FINE-TOOTHED COMB IF YOU MUST, *JUST FIND HER!*

YOU JUST *KNOW* SHE'S UP TO SOME-THING.

SOMEWHERE IN EUROPE, DEEP IN THE ALPS.

REPORT?

NO CHANGE.

WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP

!

IF WE COULD GET ANY CLOSER, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO SEE SOME-THING...

BUT WE CAN'T.

THAT PLACE LOOKS LIKE JUST ANOTHER ROCK FACE FROM HERE.

!

CHANGE IN THE TARGET SPOTTED!

A CHOPPER? OUT *HERE*?!

WHUP
WHUP
WHUP

THERE'S A *DOOR* IN THAT ROCK FACE!

IT'S OPEN-ING NOW!

AT LEAST TWO PERSONS ARE VENTURING AWAY FROM THE CHOPPER.

BINGO!

THAT'S PRIN-CESS MINA ALL RIGHT!!

GET HQ ON THE LINE, STAT! LET THEM KNOW WE'VE FOUND HER!!

TELL THEM TO SEND UP A STRIKE TEAM, RIGH--

SPLAK

BLNK

BNG

!

WHAT THE--?!

ZMM

GRUM

GRUM

GRUM

GRUM

GRUM

LORD SPAL-LANZANI.

I AM GLAD TO SEE YOU ALIVE AND WELL, TOO.

NOW, COME INSIDE.

YOU HONOR ME, YOUR MAJESTY!

COME, COME!

IT IS *DREAD-FULLY* COLD OUTSIDE. PLEASE, COME IN AND WARM YOURSELF.

IT IS *GOOD* TO SEE YOU WELL.

SO *VERY, VERY GOOD* TO SEE YOUR MAJESTY, ALIVE AND WELL!!

YOUR MAJ-ESTY...

WELCOME TO OUR HUMBLE ABODE.

OUR LAB.

IT IS HERE THAT ALL OF THE KNOWLEDGE AND THE MIRACLES OF SCIENCE THAT THE TEPES FAMILY BOASTS OF WERE FIRST DISCOVERED.

HIME-SAN, WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

FRÄULEIN MEPHISTO PHILES.

THE BLOOD SUBSTI-TUTE **STIGMA**, AND THE MASS PRODUC-TION THEREOF.

THE LIGHT-BLOCKING GEL NOW COMMONLY KNOWN AS "SHADE GEL."

AFTER OUR NEAR DESTRUCTION, IT WAS **HERE** THAT HOUSE TEPES REBUILT ITSELF.

OF COURSE, FRÄULEIN.

WE ARE READY TO BEGIN AT YOUR EARLIEST CONVENIENCE.

DOCTOR FAUST.

WE SEEM TO BE HAVING A FEW *MINOR* TROUBLES.

I WOULD LIKE TO ASK FOR YOUR **AID** ONCE AGAIN.

WELCOME, MY LADY.

WELCOME TO THE BERGAMASQUE LABORATORIES.

.....

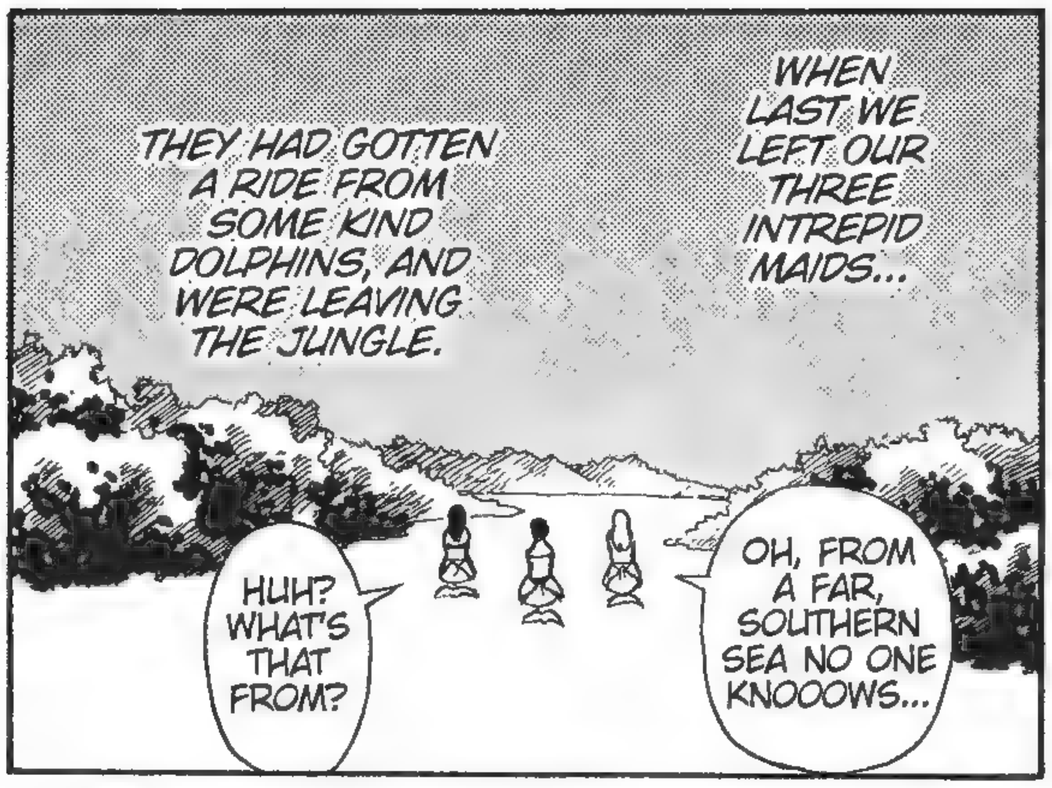
WELL THEN...

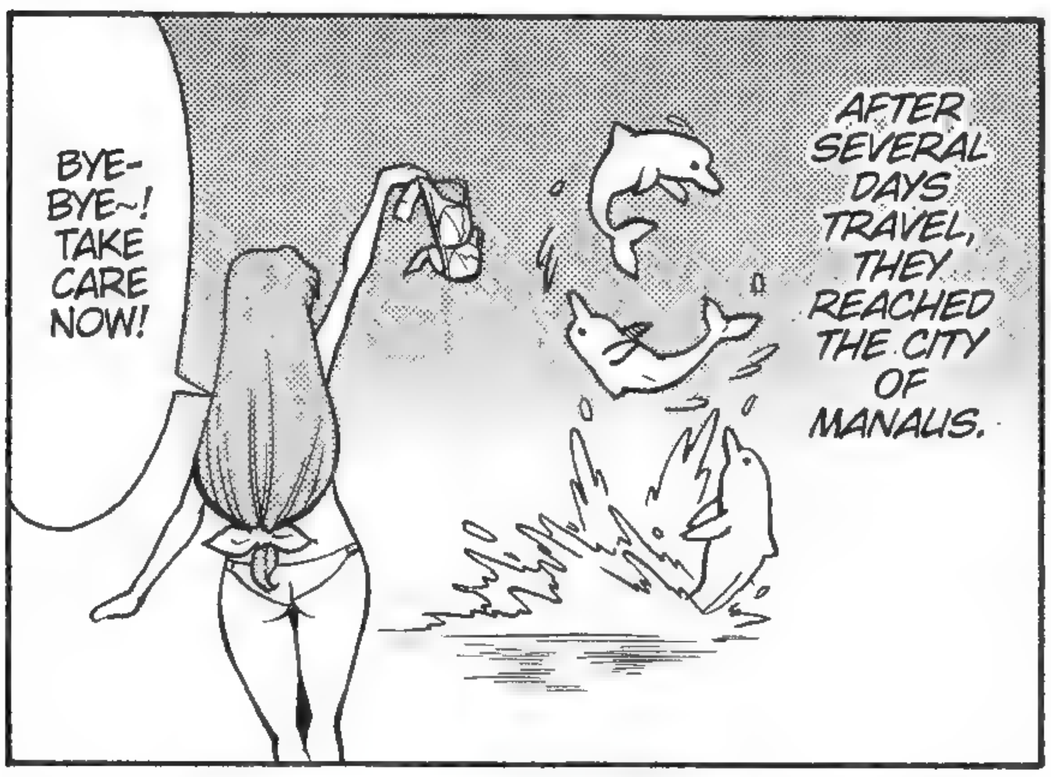
LET US BEGIN THE COUNTER-ATTACK!!

Dance In The Vampire Band

TO BE CONTINUED!

DANCE with the VAMPIRE MAID











THAT'S **NOT** SOME-THING TO BE **PROUD OF!**

HEH. BEFORE HER MAJESTY TOOK ME IN, THESE LITTLE GUYS WERE MY MAIN SOURCE OF BLOOD.

MY THROAT'S SO DRY, IT'S STICKING TO ITSELF.

NEED BLOOD... NOW...

SOOO... THII-IRSTY...

TWITCH

YOU'RE ACTU-ALLY *DRINK-ING* FROM IT?! EWW!!

SLRRRP

HEY, NOW. ONCE YOU GET PAST THE **SMELL,** THEY AREN'T THAT BAD AT ALL.

HOLD IT! WE DON'T NEED TO BE COMPARING HORROR STORIES RIGHT NOW!

GOD! WHAT'S WITH YOU TWO PANSIES? THIS IS **NOTHING!**

WHY, COMPARED TO WHEN I WAS JUST TURNED, THIS IS--

YEAH, ME NEITHER!

BLEAH! I COULD *NEVER* DRINK BLOOD OUT OF A RAT. **NEVER!!**

SHFL SHFL

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT... HERE, LEMME SHOW YOU SOME OF THE SURVIVAL TIPS THAT GOT ME THROUGH THOSE TIMES.

HANG ON A SEC...

IS *THAT* WHAT YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT?!

I MEAN, HOW COULD YOU DO THAT TO THE POOR LIL' MOUSIE ?!

EEEEWW!!

TA-DA! DIN-NER.

YEAH. IT'S NO SURPRISE THERE ARE OTHERS LIKE US HERE.

URP ...

OH YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT. MANAUS IS TECHNICALLY ROZEN-MANN'S CITY, ISN'T IT?

!

EEEEEEE

THEN WE COULD, Y'KNOW... DO *THAT*, AND NOBODY COULD SAY A THING, RIGHT?

YEAH. AND IF THEY'RE LIKE US...

KYAAAAH!!

BWAH HA HA HA!!

MWAH HA HA HA HA...

HEH HEH HEH ...

HUH ?

GOMP

AND SO BEGAN WHAT WOULD LATER BE KNOWN AS "MANAUS' NIGHT OF BLOOD."

ALL RIGHT, GIRLS, IT'S TIME TO HUNT!

YEAH! LET'S SUCK HIM DRY!!

OOOOH! HE'LL DO *PERFECT!!*

DAYS LATER...

LET US REST HERE A TIME AND REGROUP OUR FORCES.

MUMBLE

MUMBLE

COME, MY LORD. MANALIS IS *YOUR* CITY...

BWHOOO...

YEAH. IT WAS AN EVENT-FUL TRIP.

IT'S TIME FOR US TO SAY GOOD-BYE TO SOUTH AMERICA, GIRLS.

AHA HA HA HA!!

WHAT *ARE* YOU DOING ?!

WAAAH!!

GYAAAH!!

AHA HA HA ...

I MEAN, WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT WE'D BECOME THE BOSSES OF AN ENORMOUS UNDER-GROUND VAMPIRE GANG!

EVERYONE BITTEN BY THE MAIDS AND REPROGRAMMED.

RRRR

FOR MINA-HIME!

WHYYY?!

FOR HER MAJ-ESTY!

YEAH ~!

FOR EGYPT

UM, ANYWAY! FROM HERE, WE GO TO EUROPE AND FIND HIME-SAMA!

TO BE CONTINUED!!

And so, the story returns to its roots...

The Mina that Akira loves.

Yuki's friend, Mina.

The Mina that Alphonse serves.

Mina, Queen of the Vampires.

It is by Mina's hand that all will come to a close.

And the answer for which the True Mina searches will be found.

DANCE IN THE VAMPIRE BUND VOLUME 14 — COMING SOON!!